

## Diaspora Communication Patterns and Plurality of Tolerance in Barcelona, Spain

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**ABSTRACT:** *The Indonesian Diaspora includes all Indonesian people who are abroad. Diaspora and migration are phenomena that are often encountered in the history of nations in the world. Barcelona is a multicultural city with people of diverse backgrounds, a lot of Indonesians are interested in living there as a diaspora with several motivations. The education system, cultures, diversity, and inclusivity that Barcelona has to offer are tremendously accommodating, which can be translated as a good destination for Indonesian diasporas to pursue a better life. This research focuses on using Indonesian diasporas in Barcelona as the research subject, finding out the communication pattern they use daily, specifically within their tolerance level for minority groups. This research uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach to discover the adaptation process of each subject and how the changes in their level of tolerance affect their communication pattern and the approach to those whom they deem tolerable. From this research, the author concluded that the diasporas' communication pattern has changed from a high-context culture which they used to implement in Indonesia to a low-context culture due to the multiculturalism and its daily adaptation in Barcelona by the citizens. This is indicated by the increase of their tolerance level because of the exposure to diverse groups in Barcelona which the diaspora learned from and adapted as part of their life.*

**Keywords:** *adaptation, communication pattern, tolerance, diaspora, Barcelona*

### INTRODUCTION

European countries have become the most famous destination for international visitors, may they be students, business people, or tourists. They go to the countries of their choice with different purposes and perspectives, each to their own needs. Among many famous European countries with a continuous increase in international urban development, Barcelona can be described as one of the most famous tourist destinations that people frequently visit. According to the data from the Barcelona City Council news website, Barcelona Metropolis (2019), in recent days, Barcelona has received more than 12,000,000 visitors per year due to its gradually rising fame over the years. This issue highlights the occurrence of international individuals who decided

to move to Barcelona to become long-term residents it can be called a "diaspora" (Ortiz, 2019)

International Organization for Migration (2019) defines diasporas as "migrants or descendants of migrants whose identity and sense of belonging, either real or symbolic, have been shaped by their migration experience and background. They maintain links with their homelands, and to each other, based on a shared sense of history, identity, or mutual experiences in the destination country." According to Setijadi (2019), not bound by ancestry or ethnicity, the Indonesian diaspora could be defined as Indonesians who are living together as a global community bound by a sense of common homeland and nationality (Setijadi, 2019).

Focusing on the diaspora who are moving to a country or city with sociocultural phenomena way different from their own, the adaptation of cultural differences that they should do surely affects their quality of life in their new environment. With the search for familiarity, diaspora tends to look for a space of comfort and safety for their adaptation process in a new environment to run smoothly, and most of the time they look for a space with their own culture or one that is similar to theirs. In this context, the concept of multiculturalism can be beneficial for them.

Today, there are a lot of multicultural cities all around the world with different groups that are gathering in one geographical sector and different beliefs and levels of tolerance for one another. Creating values born from the intertwined lives of the collectives and a sense of understanding for collectives different from them, in historical and sociocultural aspects. Barcelona, being a multicultural city, surely lives up to its name due to its high amount of diaspora from various countries. As stated on the Council of Europe website, as of May 2022, around 17.6% of Barcelona's total inhabitants are non-nationals, with their home countries of high diversity which represents the status of Barcelona as an intercultural city (Colau, 2022). With the high level of cultural diversity comes a variety of reasons for these minority groups to go to Barcelona to become a diaspora of their own volition. One of the biggest motives, why a lot of Indonesians are aspiring to become a diaspora in Barcelona, is due to its high-quality higher education system, which is related to the quality of the Indonesian education system and the difference it has with, not only the education system in Barcelona but in European countries in general.

Gustine (2014) explained that Indonesian students cannot use critical thinking in class compared to their Western counterparts due to the usual 'spoon-feeding' model that Indonesian students have no choice but to use (Gustine, 2014). Samanhudi (2021) explained that the spoon-feeding method caused challenges for him to adapt to the education system in the United Kingdom which relies heavily on the critical thinking method and encourages students to be more independent in their approach (Samanhudi, 2021). According to these two, the Indonesian education system still

needs lots of readjustments in terms of making it more developmental in its approach and ways of teaching and learning to cater to the needs of the students to understand the values of pursuing education, particularly with higher education. This situation in Indonesia has led students to think that pursuing education internationally is better for the quality of their daily learning process and having an excellent result as their final goal, which is set in international parameters of what makes a student successful.

Within the non-academic sector, the motives of Indonesian diasporas in moving to Barcelona are the level of diversity they have in the city and how each community has its own safe space according to the geographic sector. Barcelona as a multicultural city also offers inclusivity towards the minorities and those who need it in general. The multiculturalism of the city becomes a reason for them to feel safe and secure in the new environment due to its innate nature of being diverse and inclusive; this creates a community of high intolerance.

According to the findings of a Litbang Kompas poll (2022) on attitudes toward tolerance during the 2019 elections, where Indonesians continue to uphold the value of tolerance, the state of tolerance in the country is at a good level. Religious, political, and ethnic conflicts are the primary issues that need to be addressed. (Wijaksono, 2023). Although the condition of tolerance in Indonesia is at a good level, some of the Indonesian Diaspora may come as a 'culture shock' due to differences in culture and environment. Tolerance has been discussed in the literature as a complex, paradoxical, and multidimensional construct. Various forms and distinctions have been proposed (Verkuyten & Kollar, 2021).

Born in Western countries, the term 'tolerance' was notably recent in the year it was conceptually made. The concept was born at a time when social, political, and cultural diversities were prevalent. It came from the Latin word *tolerantia*, defined as relaxation, tenderness, lightness, and patience. From this historical explanation, we can understand tolerance as the attitude of giving full rights to others in expressing their opinions, even if they are wrong or different (Misrawi, 2010). From this explanation, it can be concluded that tolerance is a concept that defines our level of acceptance of

differences, regardless of how different the external factors from our internal knowledge of the world are. The tolerance approach is one with high empathy, understanding, and compassion. This approach creates a space where the coexistence of differences can be realized with little to no significant conflicts, compromising with each other's situation.

It is believed that tolerance is a necessary and sufficient response to the problem of how opposing lifestyles can freely express themselves and coexist in harmony. The diversity of significant worldviews and lifestyles is implied by a society that is pluralistic in terms of culture, religion, and ideology. Moral disputes arising from divergent and competing views on appropriate behavior for individuals or even society as a whole are a result of this variety (Verkuyten & Kollar, 2021). This research is being done to know diaspora communication patterns and a plurality of tolerance in Barcelona, Spain. With the explanations above, we are going to delve into the thinking of Indonesian individuals who have lived in Barcelona for a year or longer to know their communication patterns. How living abroad and experiencing the city's (and country's) culture has changed their perspective and approach to communicating with other people, specifically in terms of their level of tolerance and acceptance of personal differences.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Even if diaspora concerns are not brand-new, there is constant discussion about them since they make for fascinating research topics. The term "diaspora" refers to individuals who migrate to other nations. Indonesian diaspora constitutes Indonesians who live abroad (Indriani & Mulyana, 2021). There are advantages to tolerance in the communication and economic spheres, notably in technology. Technological advancement can be attained through accepting advanced other cultures and exhibiting tolerance towards differences. Someone tolerant will be able to accept novel concepts that foster innovation and technological advancement. Pluralism is one of the key cultural principles in embracing other viewpoints and granting them a fair shot in the competitive economic market

(Wijaksono, 2023).

Cultural identities that already exist might evolve. The process of developing a cultural identity can be influenced by the encounters and interactions that people have in the future. According to Samovar et al. (2015), the process of developing one's identity is a dynamic one that is influenced by socialization into the culture, personal experiences, and familial dynamics (Ayuningtyas, Zahrah, et al., 2022; Samovar et al., 2017).

Communication styles originate from the development of cultural identity. There are two categories into which this communication style can be placed: high-context communication and low-context communication. A widely accepted interpretation of Edward T. Hall's distinctions in communication styles is that cultures can be divided into high-context and low-context communication styles. Most of the messages in high-context communication are contained in physical contexts, hence one can only fully comprehend the message within its context. High-context cultures stress nonverbal cues and require the individual to integrate meaning (Ayuningtyas, Zahrah, et al., 2022; Mulyana, 2019).

The high context cultures are seen in most homogeneous nations. In these kinds of societies, knowing a word or letter without understanding its context is meaningless. Hall contends that high-context communication is a common cohesive force with a long history that is difficult to change and serves to express the group since it is necessary to fully understand the contextual meaning of symbols (Mulyana, 2019). Japanese communication is a prime illustration of this type of communication. Indonesian expatriates in Japan experience the ambiguity and circular speech that characterize Japanese communication, particularly when directing subordinates or disagreeing with what a subordinate is doing (Mulyana, 2019). Indriani and Mulyana researched about Communication Patterns of Indonesian Diaspora Women in Their Mixed Culture Families. The purpose of this study was to determine the communication pattern used by Indonesian diaspora women in Australia who are done international/intercultural marriages (Indriani & Mulyana, 2021).

From the research, they found that mixed culture families of Indonesian women and their

spouses have five different communication patterns that are used daily, namely (1) pure English, (2) mixed language, (3) unstructured grammar English, (4) compliments and appreciation, and (5) obscene words and swearing, which are all used in different scenarios and situations, as well as considering the background of the Indonesian diaspora women. The concept of communication patterns is the focal point that is brought to light in this research, and this can be categorized as a similarity to this research. While the difference is the motivation that the research subjects have which has become the foundation of them being an Indonesian diaspora in Australia, the first research has international intercultural marriage between Indonesian women and their Australian significant other as a personal experience and value that the subjects have done (Indriani & Mulyana, 2021)

Rais (2020) researched The Adaptation of Indonesian Diaspora Communication in Korea (The Phenomenology Study of Indonesian Diaspora at Busan-South Korea). The purpose of this study was to reconstruct the communication adaptation process of the Indonesian diaspora in Busan, South Korea by learning about their experience, motives, processes, and obstacles faced. The observation was done from the subjects' early experience which consists of a lot of worries about not being able to adapt to the Korean language and culture, but as time passed those worries were put at ease. Their motives were either within the individual intimacy of their adaptation process or their purpose of living with comfort. They went through an adaptation process either by directly communicating with Korean locals or with indirect sources such as books or films. The research highlights the early process of communication adaptation of those who just moved to South Korea and understand little to none regarding the language, culture, and customs that Korea has as a society (Rais, 2020).

Siagian and Tike researched about Cultural Adaptation of the Indonesian Diaspora in Thailand's Social Contexts. This study focuses on exploring the perceptions of the Indonesian diasporas on the differences between Indonesian and Thai cultures and the adaptation process while being a diaspora in Thailand. The study showed that the Indonesian diasporas did not show any significant amount of stress in their adaptation process even though several

fields of cultural adaptation they should do due to differences from their own culture. The cultural aspect being brought to light is the similarity to this research, making the sociocultural phenomena that the research subjects have experienced the centre of the research. The difference is Kim's Stress-Adaptation model that the research by Siagian and Tike uses to analyse the stress level of each research subject regarding their adaptation process (Siagian & Tike, 2019).

## METHODOLOGY

This research uses the qualitative method with the phenomenological approach as the reference. Different experts have different definitions for research that uses qualitative approaches. By definition, qualitative research is interpretative (using interpretation) and uses a variety of approaches to examine the study problem (Mulyana, 2018). The word phenomenon, which originates from the Latin word *phaenesthai*, which means "to reveal oneself," is a derivative of the term phenomenology. Phenomenology, then, is the study of characterizing what individuals see, feel, and know in their awareness and experience at that particular moment; it can be understood as knowledge that manifests in consciousness (Mulyana, 2018).

Using the technique, a researcher will demonstrate conceptual analysis and qualitative data analysis—two components of a qualitative (Sobur & Mulyana, 2020). This study employs a qualitative methodology based on phenomenology. Because phenomenology aims to capture the essence of an individual or person's experience, it has been described as a descriptive, interpretive, and fascinating research technique (Ayuningtyas, Intyaswati, et al., 2022; Sobur & Mulyana, 2020). By going back to the experience to get a thorough description, the empirical phenomenological approach lays the groundwork for a reflective structural analysis that captures the essence of the encounter. This method seeks to reveal and explain behavioral phenomena as they manifest themselves in their perceived immediacy (Sobur & Mulyana, 2020). The research being conducted uses several data collection methods, including the following.

Observation of participant, to directly see, hear, and even feel the context of the communication that takes place, the author employs participant observation techniques. Since this method gathers data straight from the field, it can yield more precise and complete results. Mulyana (2001) asserts that observation has an impact and stifles the logic of discovery, which implies that ideas are grounded in actual human experience (Anshori, 2017). Over the five months, from August 2022 to January 2023, the researcher conducted observations while enrolled as an exchange student at Universitat Pompeu Fabra.

Interviews were done to find out what participants thought about several potential data points that hadn't been thoroughly investigated through observation. A researcher should first develop interview questions that are pertinent to the subject of the research (Anshori, 2017). The author employs in-depth interviewing methods with informants who meet specific requirements. The author prepares the primary questions or interview instructions in advance and uses them to conduct data-gathering operations. The author will ask the informant to elaborate during the in-depth interview phase if there is material that warrants more investigation. This research uses the 'purposive sampling' technique, in which the research subjects are decided by the researcher according to the subject's characteristics relevant to the research purpose and can represent the population concerned (Hadi et al., 2021). Interviews were conducted with 10 informants according to Table 1.

Table 1. Details of Informants

No.	Name (Initials)	Duration of Stay in Barcelona	Age	Occupation
1.	A (1)	3 years	42	Entrepreneur
2.	CA (2)	14 years	36	Housewife
3.	M (3)	3 years 5 months	21	College Student
4.	LA (4)	4 years	22	Freelancer
5.	DD (5)	1 year	22	College Student
6.	FRA (6)	2 years 1 month	22	Fresh Graduate
7.	NZ (7)	4 years	31	Housewife
8.	AG (8)	3 years 2 months	35	Resource Management
9.	FV (9)	14 years	35	Commercial Executive
10.	D (10)	6 years	22	Graphic Designer

Source: Obtained from Researchers, 2023

The researcher uses library research which can also be called documentation analysis. This technique is an activity of analysing documents in written form. Research with data sources in the form of texts, books, newspapers, novels, advertisements, and the like which are materials that must be analysed by the author (Anshori, 2017; Ayuningtyas et al., 2020). The researcher acquired data sources from various books, journals, both national and international journals, theses, and dissertations. This research focuses on analysing the adaptation process of the Indonesian diaspora in Barcelona, Spain, and how it affects their communication patterns and their level of tolerance in terms of people's differences in backgrounds and identities. Therefore, this research will be using Indonesian diasporas in Barcelona, Spain who had/are currently pursuing their international higher education or occupational experiences as the research subjects or samples regarding the communication patterns, adaptation processes, and the changes in the level of tolerance that they have personally experienced.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The informants explained several of their experiences regarding the most fascinating sociocultural phenomena that they have gone through in Barcelona. All the informants agreed that



the people in Barcelona are a lot nicer and friendlier than the people in Indonesia. They explained that the Barcelona locals do not hesitate to greet each other on the street or a public place even though the people involved are strangers, which makes the whole atmosphere of the city safe and comfortable for people, especially foreigners, to live in.

They emphasized the constant use of physical greetings that the people in Barcelona use, they often greet each other by kissing each other on the cheeks and hugging to show their endearment to each other, they are also way more direct in their communication style, and they do low-context communication most of the time.

### **The Difference Between Barcelona and Indonesia in Tolerance**

Informants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10 explained that the difference that they can perceive is from the sociocultural phenomena, a lot of the customs and the people in Barcelona, in general, are highly flexible and easy-going compared to Indonesia, even compared to Jakarta where a lot of people's customs and perspectives are already more dynamically flexible, there are still some traditional customs that people still do in Jakarta even though the city itself is already more advanced than the other cities in Indonesia. They also point out the openness and inclusivity that Barcelona provides as a city, which explains why they are more flexible than Indonesia.

They also highlighted the amazement they have toward the education system in Barcelona. They explained that people in Barcelona displayed openness and directness even in the academic field, which is fascinating for them due to its difference from the education system in Indonesia. How they perceived the education system in Barcelona is more dynamic than the one in Indonesia which is more stagnant.

### **The Sociocultural Interaction in Barcelona**

For social interaction, all the informants define the people in Barcelona as eminently friendly and open to differences. With that friendliness, they are known to be straightforward in their way of communicating, reflecting the behavior of people from low-context

cultures. They emphasized the loudness and expression that the people from Barcelona exude whenever they meet each other, whether it is in a public or private space. This friendliness is extensive even to strangers and international visitors who are not familiar with the cultures and customs that people from Barcelona have, they explained that this behavior of theirs makes the foreign immigrants and tourists feel welcomed and accommodated.

It is often for them to have a conversation with strangers who are Barcelona locals, they actively try to keep up the conversation without belittling what they have to say just because they are foreigners. This is very interesting for them because this happened most of the time just from them saying a simple greeting such as "Hola" or "Como estas?" This is similarly reflected in the way that they have a lively debate or discussion, they explained that expressing their opinions and perspectives in a healthy yet honest way to each other is a very common thing to have whenever they have a simple talk or a serious discussion with the people in Barcelona, whether it is the locals or the immigrants. Their honesty makes people feel safe to open themselves up as well and brings out more honesty and engagement in the conversation.

One of the most famous cultures in Barcelona is called the "siesta" culture where at a certain time in the afternoon, a lot of places are closed and people use that time to have lunch and enjoy their leisure time and then go back to work after the siesta time is done, they use this time to enjoy their lunch or afternoon coffee with their family and/or friends and connect by talking about life or personal situation.

The informant 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 defined the culture that Barcelona has as unique due to it being highly different from Indonesia. Although with a scope not as big as cultures in Indonesia, they are proud of their heritage, which is shown in their habits of creating festivals to celebrate the history of the city and its heritage. Though with all the differences, the level of multiculturalism in Barcelona in some ways is similar to Indonesia due to the numerous ethnicities and races that Indonesia has as a country. Informants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 explained that the diversity is similar with different scales, in Barcelona the people are diverse in their national identity since it is a tourist city and a

lot of people from various countries come to the city to live or just to do a short visit. While in Indonesia, it is more common for people of different ethnicities to come into a big city such as Jakarta they still have Indonesia as their national identity. The similarities can also be seen in the multiple languages that are used in Barcelona and Indonesia.

In Barcelona, it is more common for people to use Spanish and Catalan as the languages for daily communication and English for international communication with foreigners, but there are a lot of people who speak more than three languages. It is common for people in Barcelona to speak French as well, due to its geographic proximity to Spain and the importance French has in European countries, and with the fact that French as a language has a tight connection with Catalan and Spanish (they are from the same origin, Romance Language). Ethnicities in Indonesia also have their own specific and unique language, this causes the very common occurrence in big Indonesian cities where people use multiple languages to different people they are talking to. However, they explained that the tangible difference between the two is in the treatment that society gives to that diversity.

Other than the societal treatment, there is surely a difference in the sociocultural interaction aspect between Barcelona and Indonesia since they both have different cultures and customs; this affects the diaspora's point of view when they communicate. According to the informants, the most notable difference is how society defines social hierarchy between people with different social statuses. The informants define the way people in Barcelona see social hierarchy as a concept that is vaguer to determine due to the egalitarian nature of their society. Within this understanding, the people in Barcelona tend to communicate on more equal terms, which causes them to be more direct and open to discussion regardless of their social standing. In Indonesia, people tend to raise more self-awareness on the hierarchy, this creates a more attentive style of communicating depending on who are they talking to, the more the person has a higher hierarchy according to society's standard, the more the people around them speak more cautiously and politely. The people in Indonesia also communicate in a way that always avoids conflict, they prefer to keep a harmonic relationship with one another.

This affects the conversation people generally have with one another. People in Barcelona tend to have more freedom in the choice of topics due to their openness and their readiness to have an argumentative talk or discussion, while people in Indonesia tend to hold back frequently which creates an atmosphere to talk of their opinions behind the person and not being direct and honest. The choice of words is also different in both societies, according to them, a more polite choice of words is more common in Indonesian society, words such as "please" and "may" are frequently used casually, this is due to the social hierarchy that dominant exists in the perspective of Indonesian society that imbued the idea of politeness being unquestionably necessary for every situation. In Barcelona, people tend to use more imperative and demanding words due to the directness that they are trying to imply in every sentence. In low-context cultures, their main purpose in communicating is to get their points across without thinking too much about what the other person is going to feel about their words as long as what they are saying is not rude and demeaning. Due to this openness, the people in Barcelona can get engaged in a conversation anywhere and anytime even with someone who they do not have any personal or professional connection with.

These differences in the communication process affect the informants' way of interacting. Lots of them feel way more open to differences and meet new people regardless of their background and history. They feel more honest in communicating with people, and they do not put their guard up as often due to the higher level of comfort that they feel they can get from others.

### **Tolerance and Acceptance of Differences in Barcelona**

They consider Barcelona as one of the most accepting cities of the LGBTQ+ community in Europe. The community is legally and socially celebrated by the city in the form of festivals or parties every year for a month, which they call "Pride Month" or "Pride" for short. Pride is dedicated to the LGBTQ+ community for the celebration of their sexual orientation and gender identity due to the discrimination and hate speeches that are given to them in the past and even

now by people who hate on them. They explained that every year, Barcelona celebrates Pride Month every June or July, and they perceive it as one of the biggest celebrations they have ever seen in Barcelona according to their experience. They usually celebrate Pride on the street swarming with people who bring rainbow flags—which is the symbol of the LGBTQ+ community, to create an atmosphere of inclusivity and acceptance of differences in the community and to give the people in the community a sense of comfort and safety to go out on the street because they know people are celebrating them.

They also mentioned the creation of several exclusive spaces in the celebration process of Pride to give the people in the community a true inclusive safe space for them to enjoy. One of the most notable exclusive spaces is the gender-neutral bathrooms in several public spaces such as universities and governmental offices. This shows the level of consideration the government and institutions have regarding the support for the LGBTQ+ community in public spaces.

In sociocultural aspects, the people in Barcelona do not see sexual orientation and gender identity as something to be concerned about, anyone can live their truth regardless of their background. They see the people in Barcelona are understanding of differences and they genuinely do not care about whatever sexuality or gender identity someone has due to them believing that such identity and the choice to live such life is a human right and they should support that truth and choice for those who are in the community to live their truth. This happens because they believe that sexual orientation and gender identity are personal rights and not something that the city or country should control, they should have the freedom to live their life according to their preference, and politics can be used as a platform to support such ideas.

There are still people, whether they are locals or foreigners, who still do not support or even spread discriminative behaviors toward the LGBTQ+ community. Through such a statement, it can be concluded that in Barcelona, the number of people who support the LGBTQ+ community outweighs the ones who are hateful and discriminative. All the informants of this research also perceived Barcelona as a city that is highly considerate, accommodating, and friendly to people with disabilities. This can

be seen from the number of public facilities and accommodations that are attuning to the needs of people with disabilities, creating a safe space for them to adapt and grow on their terms. They explained that this inclusivity that Barcelona shows in their actions has been done for a very long time, making the city one of the friendliest for people with disabilities to come and live, not only for the Spanish locals but also for immigrants and tourists due to their inclusive access.

They believe not only do they take care of tangible access for people with disabilities such as the specification of areas and the adaptive features of several facilities, but the citizens are also forward-thinking which makes them genuinely try to understand the position of people with disabilities and how they can accommodate them according to their knowledge with diverse inclusivity. The combination of these two aspects is what makes the inclusivity for people with disabilities in Barcelona work well and it speaks for the successfulness of the implementation process. Not only with good regulations and innovation but also with high cooperation from the citizens.

The Barcelona government also actively supports the visibility and comfort of people with disabilities by fighting for their rights and supporting them legally. This support can be seen from, not only the physical support but also the mental health provision from the Barcelona government which is shown through how the public facilities are built to make their life easier despite living in a society where disability is seen as a hindrance.

Other than the LGBTQ+ community and people with disabilities, all the informants also agreed that Barcelona is a city with high tolerance for people with different religions. They adhere to peace regardless of people's identity, and that includes the kind of religion people have. They perceived that Barcelona, being a multicultural city, is one of the most tolerant and accepting cities in the world other than the countries that proclaimed themselves as accepting, such as the United States or France, the most important thing for the people in Barcelona is how-to live-in peace with each other, maintain the society, and build it together as a collective regardless of people's background.

The most noticeable tolerance is toward the Muslim community. With the fact that in



Indonesia, Islam is the religious majority group, while in Barcelona it is considered as the minority, and with the Indonesian diaspora who are the informants of this research are mostly Muslims, they notice a lot of differences in how the society treats the religious minority groups since their status changed from being in Indonesia as one of the majority groups to being in Barcelona as one of the minorities.

They perceived the treatment of the Muslim community as one that is exceptionally accommodating, the people in Barcelona try to make sure the level of comfort that people with minorities have, including the Muslim community, is high and creates a safe atmosphere for them to live. Their accommodation not only includes spatial comfort by giving the Muslim community a specific area for them to live and do their work and entrepreneurial business, but also the treatment that the people in Barcelona give to them that is warm and friendly, and the locals are informative to those who are not yet familiar with the life in Barcelona as a Muslim, which the Indonesian diaspora felt at the time they just moved to the city.

The informants agreed that the difference between Barcelona and Indonesia in treating minority groups is apparent. They explained that the obvious gap is in the cultures and customs that both Barcelona and Indonesia have which affect the perspectives the people have in treating the minority groups. They believe that Indonesia still has an obvious lack of inclusion and tolerance toward minority groups, specifically towards the LGBTQ+ community since it is still seen as a taboo topic that was introduced relatively new to Indonesian society and the lack of education about the community, and the lack of education of disabilities in Indonesia has affected the public support for people with disabilities being lacking in inclusion, especially in the public facilities that Indonesian government provide for the people who need them. The people in Barcelona, according to the informants, approach differences in people being a part of minority groups peacefully and lovingly.

The level of understanding that people in Barcelona have exceeds those in Indonesia due to the exposure to multiculturalism in the city and how they are used to using their environment as a learning experience, which makes them used to

differences. This affects how they treat minority groups. Such experiences and the adaptation they have toward differences in their society have made them more inclusive and respectful toward others. Everyone is treated the same no matter the identity, background, or whatever individual persona that people have, as long as they can maintain peace and a sense of togetherness as a part of the society in Barcelona, then they are accepted. Even if the identity that people have originated from outside of Barcelona (such as the migrants and immigrants who come to Barcelona to live). The people see the humanity in others, which then affects the legal laws and regulations of the city considering the identity and backgrounds that people have, whether it is the majority or minority, as a part of human rights. The Indonesian diasporas see such acts as inclusive and non-discriminatory. This difference affects how the informants think about the minority groups and they now can see the minority groups in a more positive light.

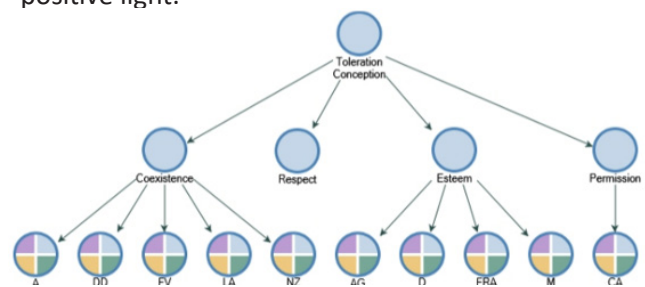


Figure 1. Informant's Level of Tolerance as Diaspora in Barcelona  
Source: Processed with NVIVO 12, 2023

### Communication Pattern of the Indonesian Diasporas in Barcelona

Most of the informants considered their behavior to change after living in Barcelona as a diaspora. The most prominent changes in the diaspora's behavior are regarding their approach to other people and how they adapt to a situation with sociocultural phenomena different from what they are used to. They highlighted the approach they have in interacting with other people, particularly strangers and new acquaintances. They feel more open and nicer to other people regardless of their identity and background, and they also feel an increase in their confidence in communicating with other people. They did not experience such feelings in Indonesia where they tend to be more closed-off and reluctant

in conferring with other people. This change affected them to be a more sociable person.

While there are informants whose behavioral changes are more toward their approach to cultural differences. They adapt to more frequent use of slang words in their daily life due to people in Barcelona who utilize slang words almost in every one of their conversations. They also experienced reverse culture shock after returning to Indonesia regarding the time for people to hang out. In Barcelona, it is typical for people to meet with their peers until midnight at places with high levels of festivities such as bars and clubs; while in Indonesia, the curfew for people going out to meet others is usually no more than 9 PM, this is due to the Indonesian culture that associate nightlife with danger.

Several other informants also accentuated their behavioral changes in personal perspectives toward sociocultural phenomena in different cities and countries. They underline the importance of minding their business, they believe that it is necessary for society to not meddle in other people's lives and to focus more on themselves despite the views of others, they believe in the relevance of cultivating respect in our current society based on what they experienced in Barcelona as a diaspora. This information corresponds with their experience which they witnessed the tremendous level of freedom within each citizen of Barcelona, whether they are locals or immigrants, this is due to the individualism that the citizens present to the public apropos of their involvement in other people's lives. The occurrence creates a culture revolving around people's curiosity about new concepts because of the general exposure to the life of those whose identity, background, beliefs, and culture are different from theirs. Altogether, with different aspects and perspectives, the informants experience changes after living in Barcelona as a diaspora, specifically in being more tolerant toward others and accepting differences in society.

After living in Barcelona, most of the informants experienced a change in their level of tolerance and openness toward those whose lives they cannot relate to and the lack of exposure to those communities according to their experience in Indonesia. They tend to put a more understanding perspective in their perception of the communities.

Several informants emphasized erasing the discriminative tendency from their behavior to respect minority groups due to the frequent public chauvinism shown towards them. They show improvement in cultivating respect as well, the informants believe that respecting one another is important when the goal is to create a harmonious diverse relationship in society—which, according to the informants, they cannot achieve well in Indonesian society.

The informants try to improve themselves more in the knowledge that they have about the minority groups and, instead of invalidating the groups' existence, they nourish their curiosity to receive new knowledge and information about the minority groups. Together with the effort to have a conversation with people in those said groups.

#### **Sociocultural Differences: Barcelona and Indonesia**

There are obvious limitations in the sociocultural adaptation of the Indonesian diaspora in Barcelona, Spain due to the high level of differences between sociocultural phenomena in Barcelona and Indonesia. The most prominent reason for its difference is due to the contrast between the culture in Barcelona which is a low-context culture and the culture in Indonesia which is a high-context culture. According to Tella (1996), low-context culture is when a culture practices communication with directness and honesty, the people in it tend to speak more without being provoked or asked first due to their willingness to speak regardless of what they are trying to say. While high-context culture practices the opposite, the people in the culture tend to cover their honesty with reserved behavior and tend not to show their honesty all the time.

According to the results of this research, Indonesia is categorized as a country with a high-context culture. Through their means of communication, Indonesians often mask their true intentions behind a façade that can be perceived as nice and friendly, this is due to the Indonesian culture which focuses on the friendliness aspect and respect for other people specifically the elderly and those who are older than you in general. The indirect communication can be seen from their behavior when they talk, they often hold back from being

truthful when conveying what they want or need in a conversation. This creates an atmosphere that is uncomfortable for them to speak with honesty due to the societal expectations for Indonesians not to hurt or be mindful of the feelings of others.

This cultural difference is most likely due to the difference in geographical aspect, with Barcelona being a Western country and Indonesia being an Eastern country. This proves that spatial differences can affect how culture can be cultivated in a specific area and how people respond to such culture. It corresponded with the quote that one informant brought up which highlighted how the infrastructure of a city or country is reflected on the citizens and how they live inside it.

### Indonesian Diasporas Communication Style in Barcelona

In 1988, Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey (1988) identified the relationships between humans who use arbitrary language and with cultures to which they are exposed. They categorised this identification within four-dimensional ranges of verbal communication style: Direct-Indirect; Instrumental-Affective; Personal-Contextual; and Elaborate-Succinct. This categorization gives imagery of communication pattern identification based on the language and style that each individual uses and how the cultures they are exposed to affect the utilization of different communication styles according to the relationship between that style and the culture. It can be identified that direct, instrumental, personal, and elaborate styles of communication are categorized within the low-context culture; while indirect, affective, contextual, and succinct styles of communication are categorized within the high-context one (Arasaratnam, 2016).

According to those explanations, the data shows the mapping of each informant's communication style, which is shown in the two tables for comparison before and after the informants become a diaspora in Barcelona.

Table 2. Details of Informants

No.	Name (Initials)	Duration of Stay in Barcelona	Age	Occupation
1.	A (1)	3 years	42	Entrepreneur
2.	CA (2)	14 years	36	Housewife
3.	M (3)	3 years 5 months	21	College Student
4.	LA (4)	4 years	22	Freelancer
5.	DD (5)	1 year	22	College Student
6.	FRA (6)	2 years 1 month	22	Fresh Graduate
7.	NZ (7)	4 years	31	Housewife
8.	AG (8)	3 years 2 months	35	Resource Management
9.	FV (9)	14 years	35	Commercial Executive
10.	D (10)	6 years	22	Graphic Designer

Source: Obtained from Researchers, 2023

Table 3. Communication Pattern After Barcelona

Informant	Direct – Indirect	Instrumental – Affective	Personal – Contextual	Elaborate – Succinct
A (1)	Direct	Instrumental	Contextual	Elaborate
CA (2)	Direct	Affective	Personal	Elaborate
M (3)	Direct	Instrumental	Personal	Elaborate
LA (4)	Direct	Instrumental	Personal	Elaborate
DD (5)	Direct	Instrumental	Personal	Elaborate
FRA (6)	Direct	Instrumental	Personal	Elaborate
NZ (7)	Direct	Affective	Contextual	Succinct
AG (8)	Direct	Instrumental	Personal	Elaborate
FV (9)	Direct	Instrumental	Contextual	Succinct
D (10)	Direct	Affective	Personal	Elaborate

Source: Obtained from Researchers, 2023

All this data that has been provided according to the result of this research has specified that all the informants have been through a change in their communication pattern, which is highly influenced by the difference in culture between Barcelona and Indonesia, as well as—according to them, the higher level of tolerance and acceptance in Barcelona than Indonesia due to their implementation of understanding multiculturalism on their daily lives. This insinuates that the pattern that they have is one with a lot of low-context cultural characteristics, with exposure to multiculturalism in Barcelona, the informants turned from using high-context cultural characteristics in their communication pattern to using low-context culture characteristics more often.

## Discussion

By being a diaspora, one can have a significant change in communication patterns depending on the geographical and sociocultural aspects that they are in at the moment. This is proved by the data of this research where a lot of the informants experienced medium to highly drastic changes in their behavior and their approach to communicating with others. They adopt a different communication culture from being used to implementing high-context culture in Indonesia to undergoing low-context culture in Barcelona and continuing such culture ever since. This also implies that the higher the difference in cultures between both geographical areas, the more adaptation process has to be done and for some individuals, it can be harder. In the context of Barcelona, informant 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 10, regardless of whether they are already knowledgeable of the different cultures or not, have done a significant amount of adaptation process which resulted in changes in their behaviors and approaches. This is different from the research done by Siagian and Tike (2019) where their informants, who are Indonesian diasporas in Thailand, have little to no hardships and challenges in adapting to Thailand's culture due to its geographical location in Southeast Asia which is the same region as Indonesia and how a lot of their cultures are similar or intertwining with Indonesian cultures.

These similarities have decreased the challenges they have to face in their adaptation process, which then resulted in an average to a low number of changes in their behavior and approaches due to the lack of exposure to new perspectives and ideologies. Such data proves that what we surround ourselves with, specifically in terms of sociocultural environment, magnanimously affects our perspective and way of living. This has a relation to the research done by Indriani and Mulyana (2021) where the informants in their research explained the different communication patterns they have and implied in their daily lives to their families due to the mixed culture they have as their identity and their family setting. The more they are exposed to different cultures, which in this case are mixed cultures from different countries in their families, the more they adopt different communication patterns according to who they are talking to.

The learning process of different cultures is not limited to only visiting the place where the culture belongs. With technological advancement and the effect of globalization, people can access the information they need to learn about those cultures. But first-hand experiences give a more in-depth learning process and details to things that are not accessible with just virtual information. This can also be seen from the research done by (Rais, 2020) where regardless of the fear of his research informants in their adaptation process in Busan, South Korea, they were able to overcome that challenge due to the exposure they had gotten from the locals in Busan and how the assimilation of culture and local individuals in their daily lives has turned their adaptation process easier and faster. The physical exposure to the Korean culture that his informants have gotten enabled them to access in-depth learning of the culture and get first-hand experiences from the place itself, similar to how the Indonesian diaspora in Barcelona adapted as explained in this research.

This research has proven that how we communicate is affected by our surroundings, and our environmental situation deeply influences our thinking process in communicating. A city or country's situation is affected by how the citizens act and think according to the sociocultural behavior that they are implementing in their lives. Barcelona as a city is filled with wondrous experiences, not only in its existence as a city but in how people interact with such openness and care for each other as well. Different from Indonesian culture, this has influenced the perception of the Indonesian diasporas to be more open, but largely in the process of accepting and tolerating differences. They create the chance to learn to be more diverse according to what they can see in Barcelona and implement those learnings wherever they go, even when they have gone back to Indonesia.

The communication pattern of the Indonesian diaspora in Barcelona, Spain implements a low-context culture, being more open to other people and regularly trying to accept and tolerate differences despite having no relation or understanding of such differences. Their level of tolerance has increased due to the exposure to multiculturalism in Barcelona and the city's effort



to imbue those learnings in their politics and social life of the city. Such implementation then they bring to other places they visit and even when they go back to Indonesia. One's identity is affected by the culture they are exposed to since they were little, and the diasporas—despite still having their original identity of being an Indonesian citizen and applying the Indonesian culture, implement a diversity of perspectives from other cultures that they have been exposed to.

As opposed to high-context culture, which frequently leaves much of its content implicitly embedded in the context and does not communicate its message overtly. The ties, shared history, and cultural norms and values among the people speaking all fall under this context. High-context cultures cherish collectivism and give the community precedence over the individual. Given that the foundation of group values eventually forms individual communication, it seems logical to promote a sense of community (Ayuningtyas, Zahrah, et al., 2022). The most representative country described as a high-context culture country is Japan (Ayuningtyas, Zahrah, et al., 2022).

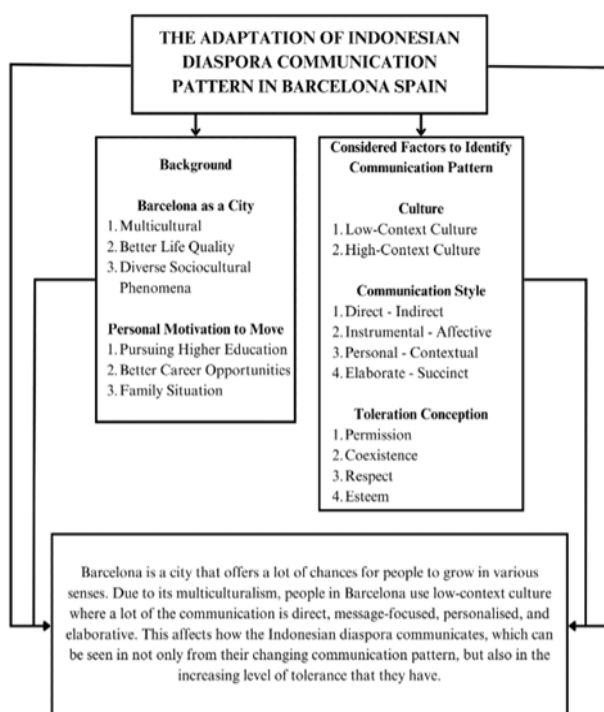


Figure 2. The Adaptation of Indonesia Diaspora Communication Pattern in Barcelona, Spain  
Source: Obtained from Researchers, 2023

## CONCLUSION

According to the data, the informants' cultural adaptation is leaning toward the low-context culture the longer they stay in Barcelona instead of the high-context culture which they previously used more frequently in Indonesia due to the country's culture. This is because Barcelona is a multicultural city that implements its uniqueness and diversity into the lifestyle of the citizens, which has created an inclusive environment where each citizen is highly exposed to differences in backgrounds and identity. Such a situation would drive them, consciously or not, to learn more about other people and practice a high level of understanding and tolerance.

With the explanation above, it can be concluded that the communication pattern of the Indonesian diaspora in Barcelona, Spain uses more of the low-context culture characteristics and communication styles that are direct, sender-oriented, personal, and elaborative because of their exposure to such culture in Barcelona which they continuously learn and implement on their lives as a diaspora. As opposed to high-context culture, which frequently leaves much of its content implicitly embedded in the context and does not communicate its message overtly. The ties, shared history, and cultural norms and values among the people speaking all fall under this context. High-context cultures cherish collectivism and give the community precedence over the individual. Given that the foundation of group values eventually forms individual communication, it seems logical to promote a sense of community. It is hoped that additional scholars will wish to investigate a related, in-depth theme.

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