

Bridging Multicultural Characteristics in Virtual Team: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT. Globalization has improved technological advancement in communication and information sharing. This drives market growth into digital settings that goes beyond geographical restriction. In order to survive the competition, organization should adapt by managing their business process virtually. This situation leads to the formation of virtual team, that are more likely to be exposed by multicultural interaction. This study examined journals articles, published from 2016 to 2020, about the relationship between virtual and multicultural team through a systematic literature review. We analyzed 40 articles and identified the nomological map of knowledge and gap in the context of virtual and multicultural team. The majority of the studies selected were empiric qualitative from various context. The reviewed studies indicated that virtual team activities, such as dispersed team members, crowdsourcing and outsourcing the project to freelancers, should be followed by high multicultural communication competency and intelligence, mediated by integrative systems and virtual team leadership. Afterwards, we built a conceptual model based on multicultural team characteristics to enhance virtual team performance.

Keywords: Bridging, Characteristics, Systematic Literature Review.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalization has improved technological advancement in communication and information sharing. This drives market growth into digital settings that goes beyond geographical restriction. In order to survive the competition, organization should adapt by managing their business process virtually. This situation leads to the formation of virtual team, that are different from traditional way of doing business. It also disrupts businesses into digital era that also change the platform of social interaction. Digital economy has profoundly affected of how companies do their business. It has shift to new firms and enterprises, changed business models, and, as a key factor supporting global value chains (GVCs), it reshaped the system of global economy [1]. Use the "Insert Citation" button to add citations to this document.

The change of global economy system and technology has impacting people management, including team activities [20]. With this rapid economic changes under uncertain environment, the service offerings may have a more efficient way to fulfil customer's needs than products. The advancement of communication technology allows businesses to take benefit on developing new service process design to bring competitive advantage [2].

The fundamental key of digital business that differ to traditional ones is the innovative way of changing the model of business using information technology that is organized in a more complex network of organization. Digital business has been radically changing the way of doing a business to reduce costs and increasing quality by focusing on their core business and delegate other functions or operations to other companies or individuals. With the adoption of information technology, business design has shift from tangible to intangible world (virtual) that consist of active design, experience design and service design [3].

One of the biggest challenges faced by intangible process within industries are migrating team activities to virtual settings. Virtual process structure in digitally assisted team is divided into three components: actors, process, and system. Gig workers, freelancers, and remote workers are one of the actors in their virtual services that deliver values to costumers with minimum to zero contact. They interact with each other using virtual medium while ensuring the five principles (physical evidence, reliability of ability, helpful, assurance of knowledge, and attention to customer's needs) of service measurement are still covered and maintaining quality of virtual worker. Designing the proper framework of digital people management may lead to good team performance (Zom10).

Digital transformation characterized by the growing need of automation and integration of business processes. Regardless of the opportunity to be more efficient in developing new market, digital transformation perceived as threat to traditional companies that already had culture and structures [4]. Particularly in non-digital services, the delivery of service still need a physical encounter that need more concern on designing the service to meet customer's needs as well as technology drives.

In the meanwhile, the full digital service performs their interaction between employee to employee and costumer can occur in cloud-based platform [5]. Digital transformation changed the workplace, employee is no longer working face to face in daily basis. Working team can be done virtually, cross

border, and in less intensive interactions. This transformation is imminent, and the flexibility of workforce open up cross-cultural teamwork. Freelancer, gig worker, virtual assistance, and independent professionals are common at working in digital service, but still need to maintain physical encounter worker with customer.

The main goal of business is to gain profit, regardless of selling products or services. Traditional business is simply exchanging products or services with equivalent value such as another product, services, or money [6]. In other way, digitally assisted business using information technology as a tool to radically change their way of doing business into virtual space as well as cross border market [7].

TABLE 1. DIGITALLY ASSISTED BUSINESS VS TRADITIONAL BUSINESS

Comparison	Digitally assisted Business	Traditional Business
Definition	Doing business via electronic and technology	Doing business in face-to-face interactions
Usage	To radically reduce cost and improve quality of product and service	In a place where digital infrastructure is not available
Process	Operate in virtual reality using gadget and internet	Operate directly
Time	Time-less	Time constraint
Purchase behaviour	Observing before buying	Inspecting before buying
Involvement	Virtual engagement using gadget, laptop, and internet	Face to face involvement both with costumers and co-workers
Model	By system	Traditionally run with the dependency to physical attribute
Workforce	Freelancers, gig workers, sub-contract, common space workers, and virtual workers	Organic and restricted workers that need to go to the office everyday
Information	Using technology	Conservatives

Source: educba.com

Digitally assisted business has advantages over traditional business by using information technology to reduce costs and improve quality. In digital business, all process run by system and in virtual space where people interact indirectly as well as in common space where everyone interact directly in low intensity. By using digital technology, companies can perform business in cross border market with various costumer and workforce that leads to the increasing of cross-cultural exposure. In a traditional business, employees need to interact with costumer, either in the

office, store or directly going to meet face-to-face. In digital businesses, third-party services is used to handle everything from production, accounting management, to human capital management. Companies can hire part time employees from their home to do some functions, hire a virtual assistance, or sub-contracting to other professionals [8].

During Corona Virus Disease outbreak in the late 2019, most businesses forced to transform their business process virtually that eradicate geographic limitation. It also forced people to change the career

basis from long-term organic employed in one company into gig economy as freelancers, professionals, and working remotely. This brings attention the business world as well as government to provide different employment strategy that accommodates remote working and helps bridging multicultural interaction within dispersed team. Given the emerged and complex nature of multicultural interaction in virtual team, breaking down the literature, critically reviewing the trends, and analysing connection between researches to understand its structures and limitations can give a target perspective on the status of research in these important fields, distinguishing key factors for future studies or theory development.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In studying the relationship between virtual and multicultural team, we use systematic literature review research method to define criteria and protocols to brings clear process and reliable output [9]. For a number of research questions, literature review, as a research method, is used to evaluate theories in a certain area or to examine the validity or accuracy of the theories [10], for example to see the relationships between variables to provide an overview of a particular research topic [11].

Compared to the integrative and semi-structured approaches to literature review, systematic literature review aims to analyse and critically appraise relevant findings and data from previous research by identifying all empirical evidence that fits the pre-specified inclusion criteria to answer a particular research question or hypothesis. In this case, a literature review provides the basis for building a new conceptual model or theory [11].

The data for this research is collected from various literatures, such as journal papers and books related to the topic of virtual team and multicultural team. A total of 632 books and articles of virtual team and 115 books and articles of multicultural team are identified, and then are classified into 40 books and articles that complement each other topics (See figure 2.1). By using explicit and systematic methods, bias can be minimized, thus providing reliable findings from which conclusions can be drawn and decisions made [12]. The data analysis process is conducted through textual examination and critical analysis on literatures to find the main ideas and relationships of the issue to produce a conceptual framework yang that explain the relationship between virtual and multicultural team. In the last step, data and theory triangulations are used to validate the findings.

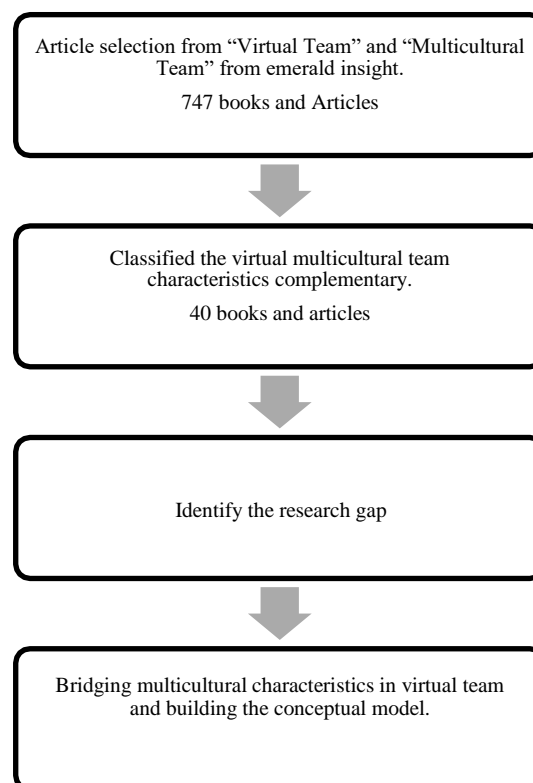


FIGURE 1. Study selection process

There will always be gap and limitations in every research, including these 40 books and articles reviewed. In the table 2 and 3, presented gap and limitations of virtual team and multicultural team previous studies.

TABLE 2 VIRTUAL TEAM PREVIOUS STUDIES GAP AND LIMITATIONS

No.	Author's Name(s)	Article's Title	Gap / Limitations
1.	[13] (Hughes, Robert, Frady, & Arroyos, 2019)	Virtual Teams and Technological Environments	The article doesn't provide distinct data collection and empirical analysis to find a more definitive answers to the middle-skill workforce
2.	[14] (Hassett, Harikkala-Laihin, Nummela, & Raitis, 2018)	Emotions and Virtual Teams in Cross-border Acquisitions	This is only the first step in this area, and further research is needed to empirically test the ideas presented. And interaction represented only a small part of the study.
3.	[15] (Tan, Ramayah, Teoh, & Cheah, 2019)	Factors influencing virtual team performance in Malaysia	First, the size of the multinational companies may bring biases. Second, The respondents might have very different experiences and perceptions in different settings of virtual team environment.
4.	[16] (Acharya, 2019)	The factors behind working In virtual community	Need international settings to gain additional insights and confirmation of the research findings.
5.	[17] (Mysirlaki & Paraskeva, 2020; Mysirlaki & Paraskeva, 2020)	Emotional intelligence and transformational leadership in virtual teams: lessons from MMOGs	it has not included important factors, such as the size of the team, or the participants' educational or cultural background.
6.	[18] (Maduka, Edwards, Greenwood, Osborne, & Babatunde, 2018)	Analysis of competencies for effective virtual team leadership in building successful organizations	Need more context to generalize the findings
7.	[19] (Gupta & Pathak, 2018)	Virtual team experiences in an emerging economy: a qualitative study	the study is based on the respondents who are team members based in India.
8.	[20] (Walsh, 2019)	Virtual Team Success with the Power of Technology Advancements	
9.	[21] (Sedrine, Bouderbala, & Nasraoui, 2020)	Leadership style effect on virtual team efficiency: trust, operational cohesion and media richness roles	the sample choice was not diversified. the generalization of obtained results can be questioned.
10.	[22] (Flavian, Guinaliu, & Jordan, 2019)	Antecedents and consequences of trust on a virtual team leader	The respondent mostly from Spanish speaking person, so it is not diverse enough.
11.	[23] (Jaakson, Reino, & McClenaghan, 2019)	The space between – linking trust with individual and team performance in virtual teams	Some members are from the same country that they sometimes performing tasks in direct meeting. So the research is mixed from virtual and direct meeting team.
12.	[24] (Lippert & Dulewicz, 2018)	A profile of high- performing global virtual teams	it was conducted in a single organization within the private sector due to time constriction.
13.	[25] (Torres-Palacio, 2019)	The reduction of production lead time using holonic manufacturing: experiment and analysis	It should be conducted in real manufacturing company
14.	[26] (Human Resources Management International Digest, 2019)	Working beyond boundaries: The merits of using virtual teams	
15.	[27] (Gardner, Kil, & Dam, 2019)	Research opportunities for determining the elements of early trust in virtual teams	Only covers small area of topics in virtual teams
16.	[28] (Wei, Thurasamy, & Popa, 2018)	Managing virtual teams for open innovation in Global Business Services industry	This study doesn't consider organization size in the research. There is time concern in changing behavior of respondent.

17.	[29] (Kanagarajoo, Fulford, & Standing, 2019)	The contribution of social media to project management	The research was not having triangulation to improve validity and reliability
18.	[30] (Tavoletti, Stephens, & Dong, 2019)	The impact of peer evaluation on team effort productivity, motivation and performance in global virtual teams	contribution positions itself in that line of recent literature that has been raising doubts in relation to the positive effects of peer evaluation on team performance
19.	[31] (Parlami & Dibble, 2019)	Teaming: Are two communication modes better than one?	This study was conducted on a small number of teams in an artificial environment; therefore, generalizability is limited.
20.	[32] (Owens & Khazanchi, 2018)	Exploring the impact of technology capabilities on trust in virtual teams	The study results may not be generalizable to universal virtual teams due to their virtual work experience

From table 2, we can see that most studies are time constrained that rises concern of changing behaviour for different environment settings [15, 24, 28]. It also

shows that organization sample and scope is crucial in making generalization of findings and theory development [14, 15, 18, 19, 21, 22, 27, 28, 31, 32].

TABLE 3. MULTICULTURAL TEAM PREVIOUS STUDIES GAP AND LIMITATION

No.	Author's Name(s)	Article's Title	Gap / Limitations
1.	[33] (Harush, Lisak, & Glikson, 2018)	The bright side of social categorization: The role of global identity in reducing relational conflict in multicultural distributed teams	Limited generalization due to small scope of MBA student participants
2.	[34] (Kalra, Szymanski, & Olszewska, 2018)	Approaches to Teaching Global Leadership in Modern Business Schools	The word "effective" has not been defined yet
3.	[35] (Kadam, Rao, Abdul, & Jabeen, 2020)	Diversity climate perceptions and its impact on multicultural team Innovation and performance	The study design is cross-sectional, and data was gathered at a single point of time. Did not consider environmental time changing in behavior
4.	[36] (Iskhakova & Ott, 2020)	Working in culturally diverse teams: Team-level cultural intelligence (CQ) development and team performance	Need to breakdown the CQ construct into its constituent parts.
5.	[37] (Liu, Adair, Tjosvold, & Poliakova, 2018)	Understanding intercultural dynamics: Insights from competition and cooperation in complex contexts	Intercultural dynamics is still a nascent field emerging from cross-cultural and strategic management.
6.	[38] (Vigier & Oatey-Spencer, 2018)	The interplay of rules, asymmetries in language fluency, and team dynamics in culturally diverse teams: Case study insights	Artificial participant is not sufficient. Hardly to find generalization for it is a case study with three objects.
7.	[39] (Ratasuk & Charoensukmongkol, 2020)	Does cultural intelligence promote cross-cultural teams' knowledge sharing and innovation in the restaurant business?	Small sample in Thailand, hard to be generalized
8.	[40] (Yadav & Lenka, Workforce diversity: from a literature review to future research agenda, 2020)	Workforce diversity: from a literature review to future research agenda	Need to explore the combined effects of several dimensions of diversity on performance outcomes.
9.	[41] (Irfan, Thaheem, Gabriel, Malik, & Nasir, 2019)	Effect of stakeholder's conflicts on project constraints: a tale of the construction industry	It was performed in developing countries.
10.	[42] (Song & Gu, 2020)	Exchange ideology and employee creativity: a moderated mediation analysis	Limited characteristics of participants.

11.	[43] (Yadav & Lenka, Diversity management: a systematic review, 2020)	Diversity management: a systematic review	Future researchers could emphasize more on deep-level diversity attributes such as values, attitudes, personality.
12.	[44] (Bengoa, et al., 2018)	Shared experiences and awareness from learning in a student multicultural environment: Measuring skills' development in intercultural intensive programs	To provide for better differentiation as to the student profile, e.g., nationality, cultural categories, a larger sample size is suggested.
13.	[45] (Bhatti, Alshagawi, Zakariya, & Juhari, 2019)	Do multicultural faculty members perform well in higher educational institutions? Examining the roles of psychological diversity climate, HRM practices and personality traits (Big Five)	Psychology typology narrowing the possibility of diversity
14.	[46] (Madsen, Mabokela, & Luevanos, 2019)	School context: implications for teachers of color	The participants are like-minded.
15.	[47] (Velez-Calle, et al., 2020)	When technological savviness overcomes cultural differences: millennials in global virtual teams	sample is composed of short-term student.
16.	(Bogodistov, Botts, & Schlatterer, 2019)	Values congruence in multicultural groups: the causal mapping method	The main study proposes a formula for distance ratio calculation.
7.	[48] (Shaik, Makhecha, & Gouda, 2020)	Work and non-work identities in global virtual teams: Role of cultural intelligence in employee engagement	The context of this study is limited to a single organization and four GVTs. The model derived from qualitative research need to be tested further for generalization.
18.	[49] (Liu, Cui, Feng, Perera, & Han, 2020)	Impact of culture differences on Performance of international construction joint ventures: the moderating role of conflict management	Middle generalization and limited scope of sample.
19.	(Brett, 2018)	Intercultural challenges in managing workplace conflict – a call for research	There is limited research comparing management of workplace conflict in dignity, face, and honor cultures.
20.	[50] (Li, Zhang, & Harzing, 2019)	Of ostriches, frogs, birds and lizards: A dynamic framework of cultural identity negotiation strategies in an era of global mobility	This paper is not a focused investigation of all possible antecedents.

As seen in table 3, limitations of conducting multicultural team research lies in the scope of participants to get higher generalization [33, 35, 38, 39, 41, 42, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49]. Objects from different location may vary in cultural perspective. So, it needs an extra mile of breaking down more factors of cultural structures [36; 44, 51] to improve the research into getting generalized findings.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

For virtual teams to be viable that can help solving organizational issues, company should gather individuals with prominent problem-solving competency. In some cases, virtual team become important for a situation of members that live in different location. There are difficulties to achieve

organization goals with dispersed team members. To tackle this difficulty, ideas of bringing communication technology into geographic and dispersed working process sorts of correspondence problems. Specifically, to help building system for planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling virtual teams. In general, although virtual teams keep on introducing new difficulties, especially to the gap of middle and low labour employees. The idea of using technology as soon as possible can help organization to introduce digital rapport by adding them to virtual communication platform alongside with digital savvy employees.

Globalization and innovative technology have progressively raised different kinds of remote work and cooperation. Nonetheless, research proposes that

an absence of face-to-face and personal meetings presents numerous difficulties to virtual teams in term of trust, emotional engagement, and leadership style sometimes brings conflicts. Researchers have contended that trust [21, 22, 23, 27, 32], emotional engagement, and leadership assume a significant part in the performance of virtual teams through virtual engagement [14] and virtual communication [15].

Virtual teams' performance also influenced by leadership style, whereas the transformational leadership mediates emotional intelligence and team performance [17, 21, 22]. Organizational leaders should face unstable and disruptive environment with two essentials collaboration process: communication-

focus and coordination-focused [20]. Collaboration technology such as Instagram, Slack, Dropbox, SlideShare, and Trello can be beneficial to be cultivated by organizational leaders to communicate and coordinate effectively [29]. To increase intensity of team coordination, leaders should develop a supporting team climate that contains team cohesion, team confidence, and team knowledge, skills, and abilities to improve virtual team performance [28].

Leaders that strive to compete in digital markets need to gather virtual teams globally. It may rise the opportunity of having intercultural interaction and dynamics [37]. To draw a better view of the bridge between multicultural characteristics in virtual team, a

TABLE 4 Nomological Map

Antecedent	Concept	Moderating	Mediating	Output
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal characteristics Cultural differences Virtual order Emotional Intelligence Clarity of tasks Technology capabilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercultural dynamics of virtual team Informal control of virtual transformational leaders that shaped supporting team climates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural intelligence Trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual team performance

nomological map from previous studies are shown in table 4

Antecedent, concept, mediating variable, moderating variables, and output. The core concept that are emerged from literature review process are intercultural dynamics of virtual teams and the informal control of virtual transformational leader that shaped team climates [28, 35, 45]. Team climates are consisting of team confidence, team cohesion, and team knowledge, skills and abilities [28].

Intercultural dynamics of virtual team derived from the clash of personal characteristics [18] and cultural differences [14] among members. Virtual team that are dispersed by nature, separated in different location and culture, need a proper virtual leader to intervene the process. Leader who is emotionally intelligent [17], clear of giving tasks, [18] and capable of giving virtual orders may control the virtual team through informal

perspectives. Cultural and non-verbal control of a transformational leaders assumed to be effective in shaping supportive team climates [22] that lead to team performance.

Collaboration between virtual teams and virtual transformational leaders is crucial to develop virtual engagement. Furthermore, virtual engagement is a vital mediating role to improve virtual teamperformance [14]. Success factors of virtual engagement lies in the intervention of cultural intelligence and trust. Cultural intelligence is an ability of people to adapt in diverse settings. The increase of team cultural intelligence is assumed to be increase team performance[36]. The connection between variables of multicultural in virtual team can be seen in figure 3.1.

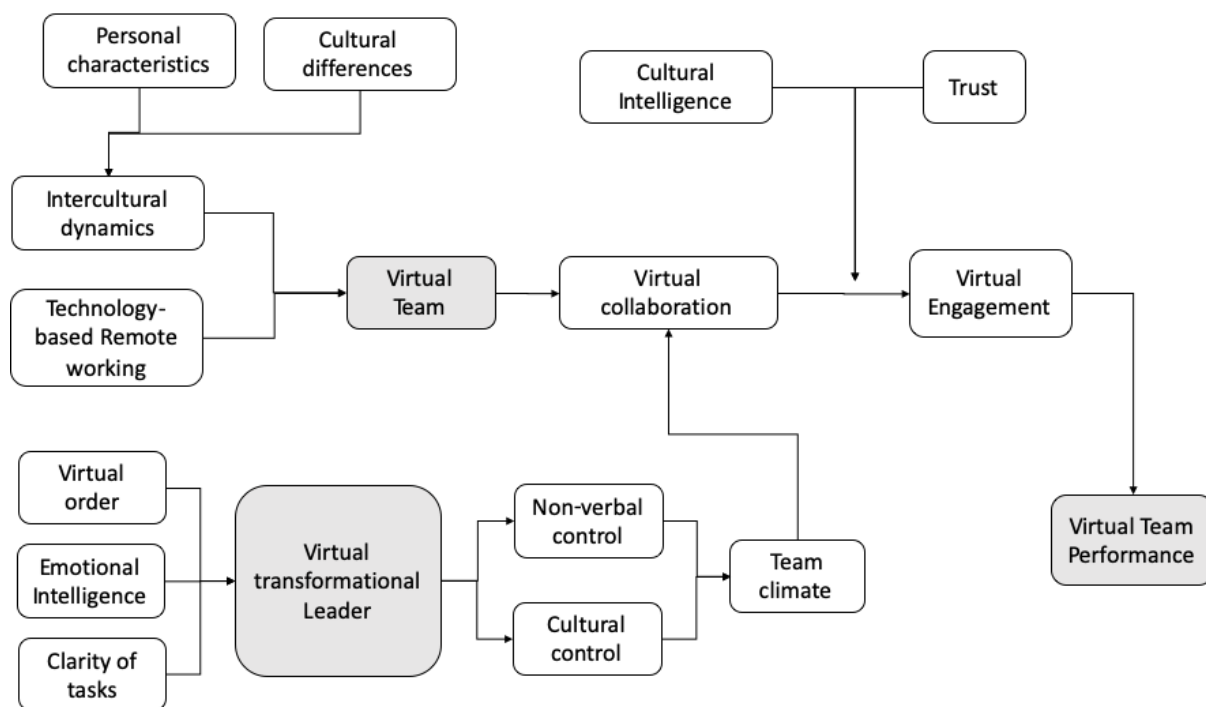


FIGURE 2. Conceptual framework

The core concepts of multicultural characteristics in virtual team lies in the formation of intercultural dynamics with technology in virtual team and the traits of a good virtual transformational leader. Virtual transformational leader's main focus is to set an informal control system to enhance team climate in virtual collaboration process, so virtual team will likely to be more confidence with their competencies in virtual settings.

The main reason of virtual collaboration is to increase virtual engagement, just like in traditional business, employee engagement is a long-term benefactor both for organization and employees. Virtual engagement is complex due to its socioemotional dynamics within individuals in terms of collaboration's timing and intensity [14]. Cultural intelligence and trust among team and leader moderating collaboration process. The higher team cultural intelligence [36] and trust [15], the possibility of engagement between members in virtual team will increase.

Despite the use of literary and rhetorical terminology to increase the generalization of the conceptual framework, the gap and limitation in these books and articles still not sufficient to claim that it can be implemented in every context. In order to overcome this limitations, future research need to consider multicultural team from diverse background using bigger and various context.

4. CONCLUSION

Virtual team activities cannot stand without the emergence of multicultural characteristics due to dispersed members and various cultural background. The mixture of Intercultural dynamics and technology brings challenges for virtual team to collaborate in performing their tasks. The issues is no longer about the team itself, but also the intervention of virtual leader that can shapes team climate through non-verbal and cultural control. In doing so, team members and leader need to develop cultural intelligence and trust with each other to build strong virtual engagement. Leader also need to give virtual orders with great empathy and delegating tasks clearly to avoid conflicts of misunderstanding. Communication and coordination is vital in collaborating process, with the help of adaptation under cross-cultural settings and trust through socioemotional dynamics, may lead to virtual performance mediated by virtual engagement.

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