

The Application of *Omotenashi* in Japanese-Conceptualized Company in East Java

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Abstract. The purpose of this research is (1) to find out how the value of *omotenashi* is applied in Japanese company in Indonesia. This research is a field research, the data were taken from the results of questionnaires, interviews, and observations carried out at tourism spots adopted Japanese style in models in Batu district in Malang regency. The research findings show that Employees, consciously, prepare well before they start working. They are fully aware that appearance is a reflection of someone to build a good image for customers. In terms of behavior, almost all employees have applied *omotenashi* when doing *ojigi* for both hotel customers and fellow colleagues. In addition, they also smile to customers. For language use, basically employees use good Indonesian and are very communicative. It is just that only 12% of employees are able to speak Japanese.

Keywords: *Omotenashi*

1. Introduction

Humans, wherever they are, are certainly impossible to live alone. They need other people in their daily activities. In order to establish a harmony when cooperative activities are carried out, an Ethic is required. Bagus [1] states that etymologically the word "ethics" comes from Greek which consists of two words namely Ethos and ethikos. Ethos means nature, habitual character, ordinary place. Ethikos means morality, civilization, good behavior and actions. The Ethics is then the source of the formation of rules and values which then result in traditions or customs.

One of the life values existing in Japanese society is *Omotenashi*. *Omotenashi* is an expression of hospitality, service, or heartfelt welcome to guests. This term was popularized by Christel Takigawa [2] when serving as an announcer in the event to introduce Japan to host the 2020 Olympics. The passion for serving, *Omotenashi*'s spirit, became the basis of the tea ceremony / Chanoyu. Chanoyu culture developed rapidly in the mid of 15th century to the 16th century. Murata Shukou was the first to form the Chanoyu school which was previously full of luxury into a ceremony having a Wabi aesthetic. This Shukou taught the "way of tea" to his student. Takeno Jouou, one of the students from Murata Shukou, continued the school of *wabicha* in this tea ceremony, then the school was developed by Sen no Rikyuu [3].

This research is a continuation of the research entitled "Culture Shock experienced by Unitomo Students in Japan" presented at the International Conference on Japanese language Education Literature and Culture seminar at UPI Bandung on September 8-9, 2018. As a first step in understanding the work culture of Japanese companies, further research was conducted in the form of library research entitled "*Omotenashi* Spirit in Chanoyu on Japanese Companies" presented at the National Seminar at Surabaya State University on October 20, 2018. Further, in this research, the researchers conducted a research on the *Omotenashi*

culture and its application in the work field. This research is a field research, the data were taken from the results of questionnaires, interviews, and observations carried out at tourism spots adopted Japanese style in models in Batu district in Malang regency. The research question covers (1) how is the value of omotenashi applied in Japanese company in Indonesia? And the purpose of this research is (1) to find out how the value of omotenashi is applied in Japanese company in Indonesia.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Concept of Omotenashi

Omotenashi (おもてなし) has the basic word motenasi (もてなし) as its base form and is given the word "O" (お) as an affix functioning as innocuous word. "Motenasi" in Indonesian is translated into acceptance, entertaining, service. According to Matsuura^[4] this word comes from the verb Motenasu (もてなす) meaning to receive, to entertain, to serve. The examples of the use of the word "Motenasi" are "手厚いもてなし" which means acceptance that is really friendly or "親切にもてなす" which means accepting hospitality. Cristel Takigawa [2], a television journalist in his remarks in Buenos Aires as a team towards the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo stated "Regardless of what generation a person might be from Japan, you will encounter that spirit of omotenashi". Takigawa spells this word slowly "O - MO - TE - NA - SHI" and ends with ojigi (Japanese style of greeting by clapping your hands and bending). After that the word "Omotenashi" became popular outside Japan.

2.2 Things Needed for Attention in Omotenashi

Japanese culture has a word "IKI (粋)". This word, on dictionary, has a meaning that shows character and heart. IKI has the meaning of a form of concern, care, and wisdom. This meaning is a representation of "sympathetic behavior". The aim of this sympathetic behavior is to "respect human". The basis of respecting humans is shown by respecting people, avoiding making people into trouble, making friends to make people happy, treating people kindly and warmly, not making someone feel bad, not hurting others. To be able to do omotenashi, the things that need to be considered are:

1.2.1 Appearance

1.2.1.1 Be Careful in Having appearance

Having self-appearance is having appearance with good intentions. Specifically, namely dressing and arranging hair, wearing clothes properly, then for women, using makeup well. Clothing and makeup is not to decorate oneself, but must provide a sense of comfort to the other person. In Japanese, the word Midashinami means "someone's first impression when seeing your expression" (最初に相手の目に飛くるんであなたなので、身だしなみです) is the first step to note in Omotenashi.

1.2.1.2 The Ways for Having Good Appearance

The ways to have appearance for each one changes depending on the place, for example appearance when working as a businessman or appearance at ceremonial events, casual events, etc. Everyone has a fondness for fashion, but things that need to be considered in the appearance procedure are as follows: wearing neat shirt collar, doing hair styling, wearing clothes according to age, cutting nails, etc. The principles like these are to show beauty by grooming without forgetting "courtesy".

1.2.1.3 The importance of courtesy

Giving a good impression to whom one speaks is the beginning of good human relations. The basis for getting a good impression is that there must be a "respect" feeling. Respect can be done by paying attention to appearance. In dealing with humans, fashion is also an important factor by considering TPO (Time, Place, Occasion).

1.2.2 Behavior

The source of manners is in behavior (movement), while, the source of behavior lies in attitude. So to behave properly, one must behave properly. Ichijou [4] said "to have proper attitude in Ogasawara Ryuu, you are firstly taught the basic method of straightening your back, lifting your chin, puffing your chest, directing face forward with a sight straight forward. In order not to get tired easily, the way to balance the upper body, is taken from the douzukuri (Bodhisattva) technique".

Douzukuri which is the basis of behavior is applied to seiza ways (sitting below) and sitting in the chair correctly, not tilting the upper body to the left and right in front of the back. In addition, what is needed to be considered is eye expression. If a person moves his eyes like looking around, it will look like an impatient human being, eyes that stare at one point can give an intense feeling. When chatting with people, don't look at one place with a strong view. It's best to see the other person's face as a whole from the chest to the head. When chatting, make sure to see the other person's eyes, see the whole body and use it properly. Not only the eyes, the mouth is also important. The best of facial expressions is a smile. Smiling is a smile made by lifting up both sides of the mouth and the corners of the mouth. Besides that the walking method cannot be forgotten. One should walk smoothly like flowing. It is dragged like carrying heavy loads.

1.2.3 Language Usage

1.2.3.1 Language is the basis of "hospitality"

By using language, humans think of many things, convey their own thoughts, express feelings and communicate with others. It is no exaggeration to say that the trait of a person arises and can be seen from the language the person uses. Eventhough a person looks impressive and behaves impressively, but if that person uses improper language then it will give an uncomfortable feeling to another person and even hurt the person whom he talks to.

1.2.3.2 Using Proper Language

Language is a means of maintaining good relations among humans. The important things to note are thinking about the position of the other persons, having empathy that thinks about the feelings of other persons, and speaking well and politely. Then the thing that must be considered in using language is not using harsh language with no sensitivity (to the other person). Kawamori Yoshizou (in Ichijou [4]) wrote "In any light, not using harsh language is indeed very difficult but feels sensitive to the feelings of the other person, do the best to avoid language that can hurt intentionally, and be careful in using language to anyone".

1.2.3.3 Calling Customers by Name

Proper words to greet a guest are Sir, Mam, Brother, Sister, etc. father, mother, mbak, mas, adik, etc., but if you know the name of the person you're talking to, be sure to call him by name. If someone named Aoki comes to a company or restaurant, it is not welcomed with "Irasshaimase", but rather with "Aoki-sama, Irasshaimase" (welcome Mr. Aoki). Even when expressing gratitude, instead of saying "Arigatou gozaimasu", it is better to say "Aoki-sama, arigatou gozaimasu" (thank you Mr. Aoki). Not only to guests, make sure also to call your boss and subordinates with their names. When asking for help from a subordinate named Yamamoto, then instead of saying "you, please" it is better to say "Yamamoto-san, onegaishimasu" (Dear Yamamoto, please). In short, language is an expression of the heart.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This research belongs to qualitative research using phenomenology method. Phenomenology Studies is a point of view that focuses on individual's experiences and interpretations of the world [5].

2.2 Scope of Research

This research is to analyze Omotenashi culture and its application in Japanese-conceptualised company.

2.3 Research Sites

The research was conducted at tourism spots adopted Japanese style in models in Batu district in Malang regency

2.4 Data Collection Techniques

The techniques of collecting data used were questionnaires, and interview carried out to both employees and employers

3. Findings and Outcomes

3.1 Application of Omotenashi in Japanese-conceptualised company in East Java

Employees, consciously, prepare well before they start working. This shows that they are fully aware that appearance is a reflection of someone to build a good image for customers. It

can also be used as an indicator that the employee has a courtesy in welcoming guests by displaying a clean and pleasing appearance. On the other hand, the need to pay attention to appearance can show someone's respect for others or the other person so that employees have shown respect in welcoming customers who stay or visit the company.

In behaving, almost all employees welcome guests with feelings of pleasure and joy. They welcome customers by smiling. In applying the omotenashi culture, this attitude of behavior is not just a smile, but also related to facial expressions, eyes, and mouth. In a brief observation, it was found that employees only showed a smile to customers regarding the behavior of omotenashi to customers. Other findings obtained are related to customers who bring small children when visiting. In the Japanese omotenashi theory, it is stated that the behavior shown by employees when meeting small guests (children) who come with their families is that employees greet their small guests first, and then welcome adult guests (parents of the child). It seems that this is not fully understood by the employees of The Onsen Resort, because the first thing they did was they prioritized welcoming adult guests and ignored their small guests.

The next element is the use of language. Basically, employees use Indonesian as their language of communication with guests and fellow employees. This is because most visitors are domestic tourists, so they use Indonesian as their daily communication. By seeing the atmosphere of a resort that is full of Japanese nuances, the resort should also provide employees who have the ability to speak Japanese. But unfortunately, there are only 12% of employees who are able to speak Japanese. Nowadays, resorts or public places that are managed professionally by highlighting special characteristics are very inviting to many visitors. Most visitors are interested and want to know more about the culture and beauty of Japan. It will attract more and more visitors, if all employees are equipped with fluent Japanese language skills, so that visitors also feel living and staying overnight at a Japanese native resort with the skills of employees to communicate Japanese in a simple way.

3.1 The Means of Applying Omotenashi Value

The application of omotenashi values according to Ichijou cover three elements, namely appearance, behavior, and use of words. These three elements have been implemented by employees, for example when entering the lobby, the guest will be greeted with ojigi, smiles, greetings, and friendly welcome expression from the receptionist. The appearance exposed is also neat so that it gives a comfortable impression. In addition to the lobby room, the same thing is done at the restaurant, namely ojigi, smile, and greetings. The way to use the language also shows friendliness that makes guests feel respected and comfortable.

3.2 Obstacle Factors in the Application of Omotenashi Value

Cultural factors became the main obstacle in the implementation of omotenashi. Omotenashi, in its application in Japan, is not only providing services to guests, but also involving a very deep element related to the heart of doer. Omotenashi cannot be done briefly and it requires a long period of practice to grow a sense of omotenashi in a person. This is certainly not easy for Indonesians who are used to work with their feelings (moody). Another thing related to cultural differences in omotenashi is the behavior of ojigi (greeting with bending) which is often done by omotenashi doers. Japanese people are used to ojigi when meeting other people. This is different with the habits of Indonesians who only greet by smiling. It certainly would be considered strange if fellow Indonesians do Japanese-style ojigi.

4. Conclusion

Based on the characteristics expressed by Ichijou, the things that need to be considered are appearance, behavior, language usage. Basically, three important elements related to omotenashi above have been applied by employees of the company. In terms of appearance, employees mention that appearance becomes something that must be considered after running their respective jobs. Employees showed omotenashi's attitude in terms of appearance starting from the preparation of starting work by tidying up. Furthermore, in terms of behavior, almost all employees have applied omotenashi when doing ojigi for both hotel customers and fellow colleagues. In addition, they also smile to customers. For language use, basically employees use good Indonesian and are very communicative. It is just that only 12% of employees are able to speak Japanese.

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