A Qualitative Study Into The Cultural Differences Between Latin American And Germanic Students In Their User Experience With Website Tutorials

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06/30/2025
APA 7th Edition

Abstract

Aim: This study aims to explore to what extent students from Latin American cultures perceive website tutorials differently from students from Germanic cultures, addressing the lack of comparative research on cultural differences in the user experience of digital instructions. Background and Relevance: By utilizing Hofstede's cultural dimension of Uncertainty Avoidance (UA), the study investigates the extent of how cultural backgrounds influence users' expectations and perception of website tutorials when performing simple tasks on a demo website, adding to the limited literature comparing Latin American and Germanic perspectives in a user experience (UX) context. Research Question: The research question this study aims to answer is to what extent do Latin American students perceive tutorials differently to Germanic students? Methods: A qualitative design was used with sixteen university students, eight of each cultural group, who completed a controlled task on a demo blog-post website ("MyLore") using either a short (Tutorial A) or long (Tutorial B) tutorial. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, thematically analysed, and coded to compare perceptions of usefulness, efficiency, trust, and overall attitude towards tutorials. Discussion: The analysis from the interviews confirm that cultural background of users can affect their user experience and their perception of website tutorials as explored by previous research Latin American participants displayed a stronger preference for structured guidance and a positive perception towards both tutorials, while Germanic participants share the preference of not needing a tutorial. This expands on the previously lacking literature that

compares the cultures of Latin America and Germanic countries. Conclusion: This study demonstrates that cultural background, when analysed with the Hofstede dimension of Uncertainty Avoidance, influences students' perceptions of website tutorials. Websites should consider adapting tutorial formats that better fit the server region in which they are accessed, ensuring instructions accommodate users' expectations given their cultural background.

Keywords: cultural dimensions, Hoftedes, website tutorials,

Introduction

There is a growing trend of reliance on technologies for achieving personal tasks, completing jobs, and all other kinds of activities through digital means with varying levels of complexity in their usage. An example of a complex technology is Adobe (n.d.) which offers a variety of products for photo editing, graphic design, video editing and more. Each product presents intricate and complicated features to produce quality user-products when using it for the first time, making necessary the presence of tutorials. A form of direct and explanatory user-manual, tutorials show to the user the main features, give quick examples, and offer further insights for any other questions, allowing for easier navigation and stress-free usage for the user. This benefit is reflected in the medical field where tutorials help learning practitioners, through a website, practice the best patient maneuvering while ensuring their safety and health (Bygholm et al., 2018). The perception of tutorials and other forms of user instruction might differ depending on the user's cultural background.

Some cultural differences might affect how people navigate and utilize websites, and responses and attitudes can differ when encountering navigation guides, such as tutorials. Cultural differences are notably best explained and categorised for comparison into six well-defined dimensions by Hofstede (2011).

These dimensions are Uncertainty Avoidance – the extent a society is comfortable with possible ambiguity and encountering unfamiliar situations, Power Distance – how much a culture accepts power and authority distribution, Individualism and Collectivism – how much a society promotes individualism or being part of a group. The other dimensions are Masculinity and Femininity, Long and Short Term Orientation, and Indulgence and Restraint. Hofstede (2011) explores these differences in many settings, from how it works in a family setting to the workplace, comparing the data of cultures of over 70 countries.

With such broad dimensions, many studies are done comparing disparate countries such as the United States and China in many varying aspects, such as Li (2019) extensive PhD research on how each culture perceives instructions in the form of manuals and similar forms, published in the 2019 IEEE International Professional Communication Conference. However, there is little to no literature on the differences between Latin American cultures – which are relatively similar in most dimensions and unified for this study – and European cultures, such as those from the Netherlands and Germany, and how they interact and perceive the use of instructions of a website in a user experience (UX) setting. Notably, these cultural differences can also be seen in the UX field. Such differences extend from how the website's products and services are displayed, how the layout and content is perceived, and how instructions for use are taken.

This paper will focus on the differences between university students from the under-researched countries of Latin America and compare them to Dutch and German students. Through the observation and qualitative analysis of how these students interact with a website following different forms of tutorials, this study aims to put forth the cultural differences in these interactions, allowing for awareness of their disparities and giving a further understanding behind such differences and answering the question of *to what extent do Latin American students perceive tutorials differently to Germanic students?* In comprehending the existing cultural differences, UX can be tailored based on a user's region and increasing their overall satisfaction towards a website or software.

Theoretical Framework

Culture, How To Compare, And Influence

When wanting to attribute a person's behavior to culture, it is quickly recognized the many aspects and nuances involved as culture is not a one dimensional social behavior. The more sustainable and manageable form to analyse a culture and its influence in behavior and attitudes is to divide it in small, differentiated concepts.

There are several different frameworks and models created to understand cultures, some of these models are the Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) model, directed more at understanding and comparing cultures but more turned towards a business context, the GLOBE study has mostly similar cultural dimensions but is much more complex and

focused more in business context, and Schein (1983) model that analyses organizational culture rather than national culture (Shi & Wang, 2011).

A thorough study done by Hofstede (2011) looked into 70 different countries, with multiple cross comparisons, creating six distinct dimensions of culture with the intent of making comparisons between cultures easier by decreasing the amount of variables into broad categories that are repeated in his extensive data.

Hofstede's framework of cultural dimensions remains central to cross-cultural research, Lee et al. (2012) and Srite (2006) mention in their respective papers that although it is considered outdated, there is no current model as extensive and well-used to compare it to as an alternative, including its practicality, therefore, it is also used in this study. Hofstede's model has six dimensions: Power Distance, Individualism and Collectivism, Masculinity and Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Long and Short-Term Orientation, and Indulgence and Restraint (Hofstede, 2011).

The first dimension of Power Distance is described in Hofstede's (2011) paper as how people with less power in settings such as work and family see the inequality of power compared to someone who holds more of it. The second dimension of Individualism and Collectivism refers to people from societies that value more of an individualistic culture have weaker bonds with those who aren't of the immediate proximity, whereas societies focused on collectivism form stronger in-groups connections and bonds.

The masculinity and femininity characterize the cultural differences associated between men and women, respectively. Masculine traits in society are described as assertiveness, competitiveness, and achievement. Feminine traits are attributed to caring for the weak and compassion, where the society is more consensus-oriented. In the case of Long and Short Term Orientation, they respectively refer to societal focus on future achievements and rewards, compared to focusing on the present and maintaining tradition and values of the past. For cultures who engage in Indulgence are more open to gratifications and engage in more human desires and entertainment. The opposite is said of cultures that practice Restraint, the suppression of gratification and regulation of desires.

Lastly, the dimension this paper will focus on is Uncertainty Avoidance (UA), the extent that people feel uncomfortable with uncertainty and ambiguity of a situation, where they seek beliefs and engage in behavior to feel comfortable. Countries that compose Latin America, such as Mexico, Bolivia, Argentina and Brazil have a high level of UA, meaning they prefer more structured forms of learning and context, while countries with low UA such as Germany, Netherlands and are more independent, preferring a more self-guided form of

learning and understanding (Hofstede et al., 2010). The UA cultural dimension best fits the aim of this article in understanding cultural differences in how users from different backgrounds interact and perceive tutorials, which are a form of providing UA by guiding the user step by step through the website/software. Similar to user manuals (Li, 2019), website tutorials are a form of instructional materials designed to support and guide users in understanding and effectively interacting with a digital system. It combines both verbal and visual content to guide users through tasks, and enhance usability. These differences are important to take in consideration in the creation of software and content as it determines how someone uses technology and to what end, and in the case of this research, it can also depend on the culture the user is exposed to.

Cultural background significantly affects how individuals adopt and use technology. Lai et al. (2016) emphasize that individuals' cultural values, such as collectivism or UA, shape their self directed use of technology for language learning beyond formal settings. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2018) conducted a meta-analysis showing that national cultural values strongly influence the adoption of electronic banking, especially in terms of trust, ease of use, and perceived usefulness. This highlights that users from different regions not only see technology differently but also attribute varying degrees of importance to autonomy, support, interface clarity and understanding. Such variations can be vastly different or surprisingly close depending on the geographical location and history behind existing cultures and customs.

Latin American cultures generally exhibit higher power distance and uncertainty avoidance, along with strong collectivist tendencies (Bankole & Bankole, 2016; Lai et al., 2016). These cultural traits can lead users to favor more detailed tutorials and more supportive interface elements when engaging with new technology. In contrast, Germany ranks relatively low on uncertainty avoidance but lower on power distance, presenting a cultural focus on structure, efficiency, and clarity (Hofstede, 2011). German users may appreciate thorough but concise instructions and logical interface design. With a culture very similar to that of Germany due to historical events and geographical location, Dutch users have in general and on average a low power distance, individualistic, and lower uncertainty avoidance culture. Dutch users might therefore prefer flexible, minimalist interfaces that empower them to explore independently without excessive guidance.

For the purpose of this research and based on cultural and geographical proximity and similarities, countries in the Latin American region are categorized as one culture, while both Netherlands and Germany are categorized as Germanic cultures.

User Experience and Influences of Culture

The user experience is shaped not only by interface design, but also by cultural exposition and the influence of expectations and interpretations. Santoso and Schrepp (2019) find that users from different cultures prioritise different UX dimensions; for instance, aesthetics may be more valued in one culture, while efficiency might be emphasised in another. Pereira and Baranauskas (2015) suggest a value-oriented approach to interactive system design, advocating for culturally informed UX development that reflects users' beliefs, traditions, and social norms. In Lee et al. (2008) analysis of cultural dimensions for UX between countries and product usage. It found that products with high individualism in countries in the likes of the US would benefit in these regions if provided with more features the user can interact with to best suit their needs, and some countries, such as Russia, prefers manuals to be as detailed as possible to inform product consumers as best as possible about the products functionalities and utilities.

When cultural context is ignored and not considered, even well-designed systems can fall short in perceived usability and overall satisfaction. Consequently, users may be less inclined to continue utilising the software or website due to frustration and annoyance. In the systematic review by De Souza and Bernardes (2016), cultural differences influence UX by shaping users' expectations and behaviours when interacting with a website/software, with 87% of the reviewed studies confirming this conclusion.

There is great importance in creating a website that satisfies user's needs and expectations, which as dictated by their culture. As such, by utilising the Hoftede's cultural dimensions as a framework answering the question of *to what extent do Latin American students perceive tutorials differently to Germanic students?*

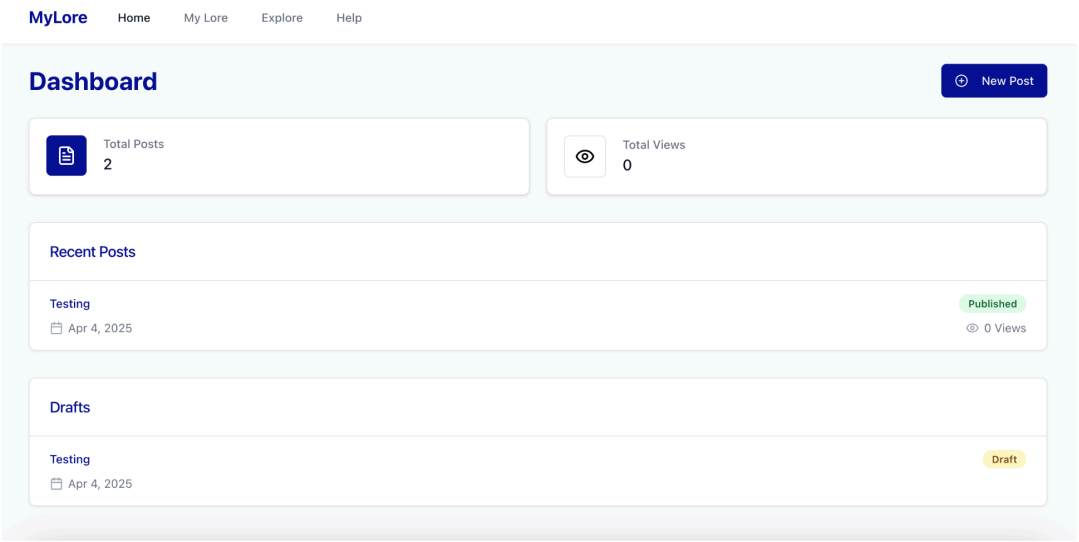
Method

Materials

For a controlled user experience, a demo version of a simple blog-post website was created with the intent to use solely for this research named "MyLore". The website features a "Home" page (Figure 1), a page to create and edit posts (Figure 2), and a "Help" page that offers further insight on the website features and tutorial options, which are mainly for the researcher to use. Due to the website being a demo version not deployed in any database, the researcher's laptop was used with all participants.

Figure 1

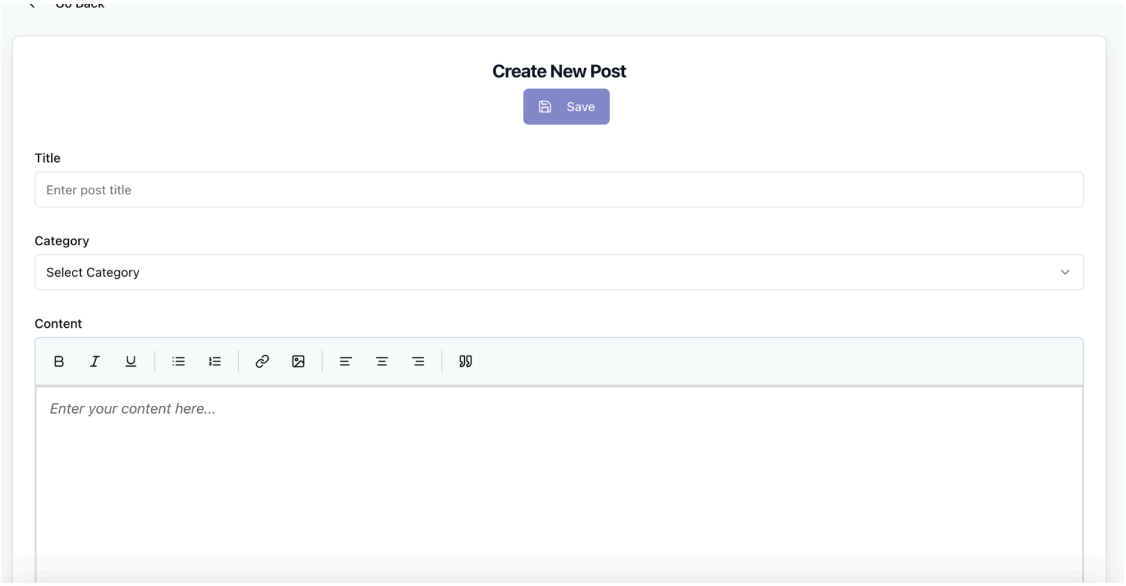
"MyLore" Home Page



Note. Initial home page of the "MyLore" blog post website

Figure 2

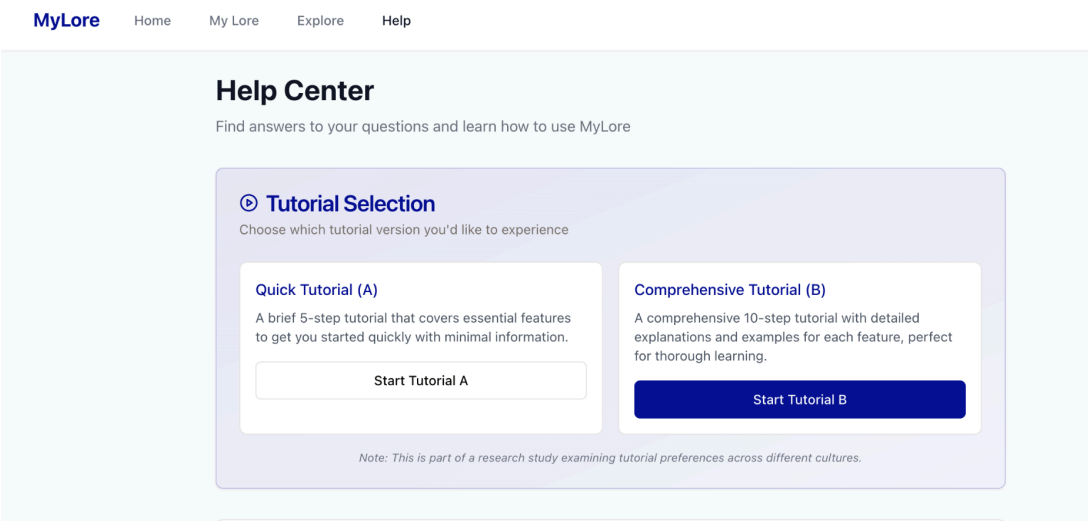
"MyLore" Post Page



Note. Post page where users (participants) can create posts

Figure 3

"MyLore" Help Page



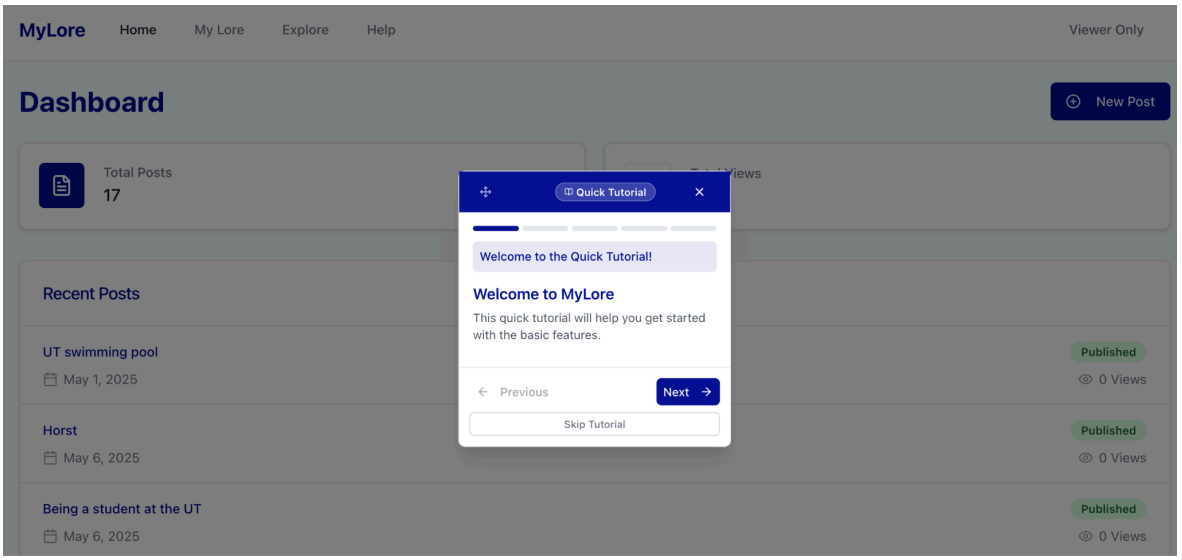
Note. Help page only researcher access to select tutorial that will be shown to users (participants)

There are two tutorial options on the website, one is a Quick Tutorial (Tutorial A) and the other is a longer version of the same tutorial with redundant explanations and guidance (Tutorial B). The researcher selects the tutorial the participant will navigate through by clicking on “Start Tutorial A/B”, seen in Figure 3.

The “Quick Tutorial (A)” consists of a total of five steps, each step’s description can be seen in Table 1 [Appendix 2], with a preview of the first step in Figure 4.

Figure 4

First Step of Tutorial A

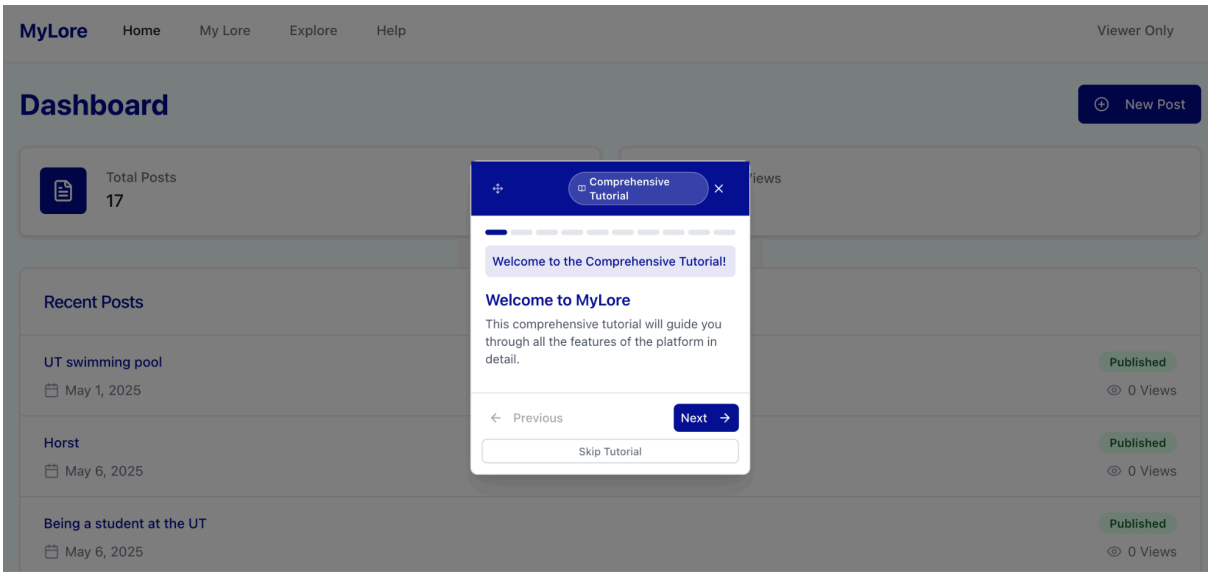


Note. Visualization of how the tutorial pop-up shows on the website

The “Comprehensive Tutorial (B)” consists of a total of ten steps, each step’s description can be seen in Table 2 [Appendix 3], with a preview of the first step in Figure 5.

Figure 5

First Step of Tutorial B



Note. Visualization of how the tutorial pop-up shows on the website

Study Design

The interviews for the study were conducted in-person through a semi-structured in English. The questions were tailored around the cultural differences between Latin American participants and Germanic participants for either scenario. The participants required the interviewer’s working laptop displaying the prototype blog-post website with either the short format tutorial (A) or long format tutorial (B) at the start of the task, with the follow up interview upon completing their assigned task of making a generic blog post about the university campus was audio recorded by the interviewer.

The interviews were later transcribed and cleaned for the inter-rater reliability testing for the qualitative data analysis using a set of six codes, each with a positive and negative subcode to classify the sentiment. Detailed examples are in Table 3 [4], using both questions and responses for added context due to the lack of substantiated answers from participants. After the coding, the results compare the overall sentiment between Latin American and

Germanic participants towards the tutorial of the "MyLore" website and of tutorials in general. The following discussion section connects the relation between the findings of the two different cultures with the Uncertainty Avoidance cultural dimension from Hofstede's framework.

At the end of the study, experienced limitations, concluded suggestions and implications for following studies and real life uses are explored.

Procedure

These participants took part in exploring the demo blogpost-type website "MyLore", where they faced either a tutorial of a quick and to the point tutorial of how to navigate and post a blog. Each participant was given the same task of writing and posting a blog-type post about the campus. This allowed participants to write something they are familiar with and not an identifiable, personal information. The researcher then selected the Tutorial and handed the participant the researcher's laptop for a controlled experiment. The main pages of the website can be seen above in Figure 1, Figure 2 and Figure 3.

Any and all ethical concerns and implications were sent and accepted by the Behavioural, Management and Social sciences (BMS) Ethical Committee for data collection from volunteer participants. The participants names were not recorded and other than age and nationality, all and any other form of identity were made anonymous. The participants are informed they are free to leave and stop the experiment at any time they see fit without explanation and consequence, and that their personal data aside from the aforementioned was made anonymous. They were also asked if they agreed for the interview to be recorded and subsequently transcribed for the analysis. Upon a verbal, non-recorded affirmation that they wished to proceed, the user experience task and interview commenced.

Participants

A total of sixteen participants (n = 16), students of the University of Twente, took part in the given task and followed-up interviews voluntarily after being recruited in person and through Whatsapp. The participants were chosen based on their nationality, Latin American, Germanic, their age of at least 18 years old, be a student of the University of Twente, and English proficiency. Although gender was not looked upon as a factor in the study, it was noted alongside the participants' nationality. In the case of this study for easier comprehension and grouping, participants of Dutch and German nationality were categorized as being of Germanic nationality (English, n.d.). In the case of American students, any who

were of the nationality of any of the thirty three countries that constitute Latin America could take part in the research.

The participants were separated between each tutorial scenario, with an equal number participating in them, 8 participants in Tutorial A and 8 participants in Tutorial B. For Tutorial A, 4 Latin American and 4 Germanic participants participated and 4 Latin American and 4 Germanic participants took part in Tutorial B.

After fulfilling the task, each participant will be asked what their experience and thoughts were while using the website and how they felt regarding the tutorial scenario they were put to navigate through. The interview questions are based on the perceived enjoyment, usefulness, trust, expectancy, and efficiency, seen in Table 4.

Table 4

Base Interview Questions

Perceived User Experience	Interview Question
Enjoyment	Did you enjoy going through the tutorial presented to you? Was the experience of posting on this blog website entertaining overall? Can you describe a part of the tutorial that stood out as particularly engaging or dull? Would you have preferred to explore the site on your own rather than follow a tutorial? Why? How did the tutorial influence your overall enjoyment of using the website?
Usefulness	Did you find the tutorial necessary to understand the website's mechanics? Do you think the tutorial was useful in performing your task? How did the tutorial affect your confidence in using the website? Which parts of the tutorial helped you most? Which were unnecessary? If you didn't have the tutorial, what features do you think you would have struggled with?

	Do you think this type of tutorial is more useful for beginners or for all users? Why?
Trust	Do you believe the tutorial showed the correct features? Did the tutorial feel reliable to you? Why or why not? Do you think the tutorial showed a non-existent feature? For example, saying you can play music while you use it when it doesn't have that feature. If the tutorial had made a mistake, how would that have affected your trust in the website? Did the tone or style of the tutorial influence your perception of the website's credibility?
Expectancy	Was the tutorial up to your expectation of what a tutorial for this type of website would look and work like? Was the tutorial sufficient to understand the website? Did the length and detail of the tutorial match what you thought it would be? How does this tutorial compare to others you've used in the past? Did the tutorial prepare you well for the task of creating a post? Why or why not?
Efficiency	Did you find the tutorial to be efficient in explaining the features present in the website? Do you think the tutorial was too short/long, or just enough? Was there any information that could have been explained more clearly or skipped? If you had to improve the tutorial's efficiency, what changes would you make?
Tutorial Usage	What are your overall thoughts on tutorials for websites? What kind of websites/softwares are you

	more likely to skip tutorials and which ones are you more likely to stick to? How would you have done your task without the tutorial? Would it have been the same, slightly longer (to complete), or more difficult?

Note. This table does not count the possible follow up questions that are tailored to each specific participant. It is a basis for the questions that will be asked.

Data Analysis

The transcribed interviews were organized through a deductive thematic analysis, utilizing themes interpreted from Hofstede (2011) cultural differences. The use of thematic analysis is to identify and analyse patterns of themes within a set of qualitative data, and as understood by Vaismoradi et al. (2013), it helps provide the nuanced view of a set target population of the qualitative study their views, thoughts, understandings, etc.

A non-participant of the research and experiment, familiar with the aim and content of the study independently coded the subset of the interview transcripts, ensuring the quality and reliability of the codes to be used. The resulting Cohen's Kappa coefficient of the transcribed interviews was of a 0.7 inter-rater reliability, a substantial agreement, meaning sufficient quality of the codes utilized for the interviews. The collected data was analyzed through ATLAS.ti, with each section coded according to Table 3 in Appendix [4].

There were six themes used in the thematic analysis of the interviews, each separated into negative and positive, and two additional themes added through coding and analysis. The total 14 are seen in Table 3 in Appendix [4].

Results

Following the thematic analysis of the sixteen interviews with the presence of expected patterns and intriguing findings, as well in how either cultures reacted and perceived tutorials, a comparison with both cultures is made between the two forms of tutorials, short (A) and long (B) format. The first most common recurring theme from both cultures is “Efficiency Positive”, defined as “the tutorial explains with minimal text in a concise, direct manner the functionalities and purpose of the website.” Participants from both cultures agree that both quick (A) and comprehensive (B) tutorials were efficient in explaining the website

features. Below are two examples of this from both participant groups, with the “R” representing “Researcher” and “P” representing “Participant”.

“R: Do you think the website was simple enough to use where it would not require a tutorial?
P: Yes, but I think the tutorial really helps speed things up instead of you, yourself finding out, like, what to do.” (Latin American Participant, Tutorial A)

“*R: Did you find the tutorial to be efficient in explaining the features present in the website? Did it explain well enough?*
P: Yeah. I think some parts, but yeah, some other parts I didn't pay much attention to. I'm sorry about that, but I think so. Like, yeah, the one that I found interesting, and I like, put more attention to, yeah, it did.
R: Do you think the tutor was too long or just enough?
P: No, I think it was enough.” (Germanic Participant, Tutorial B)

The participants perceive both forms of the tutorial to be efficient in explaining the website’s features and mechanics, such as where to make a post, the topics of the blog, where to write, modifications that can be done, how and where to add media, places to add social media and where to publish the blogpost or save it as a draft. With high efficiency, as commented by the participants, it expedited the completion of the task and understanding the website rather than navigating it themselves.

However, there was an interesting repetition of participants skipping through the tutorial and recalling being unable or in doubt of the existence of a feature is prevalent. The most common occurrence and mentioning was of the image icon, with “Step 5” in the long tutorial being solely about adding media in image format.

“*R: If the tutorial wasn't there, do you think there are any features you would have struggled with?*
P: Because I skipped too fast with the tutorial. So, without the tutorial, which would have been like I just skipped through it, I probably wouldn’t have found the photo feature.”
(Germanic Participant, Tutorial B)

The lack of attention towards all tutorial steps is reinforced by the majority of participants claiming that they skipped through the tutorial rather than read each step, causing

them to miss some important and inspiring information. This happened with both tutorials. Only two participants included images in their posts, one Latin American and ther other Germanic. When asked, both said they saw the image icon in the tutorial, a total contrast to what participants who didn't include an image said because they didn't see an option or didn't want to. Although not considered in either the analysis or results, these two participants also posted the longest blog posts within their groups.

The second most occurring theme differs between the two cultural groups, with overall "Tutorial Usage Positive" defined as a positive attitude towards tutorials in general in this and other platforms was most common in the Latin American participants. For the Germanic participants, the same theme was the third most occurring one, following the "Usefulness Positive" theme, where the tutorial helps the user to navigate the website.

The aim of tutorials is to help users understand the platform they use for the first time, something the participants from both groups believe.

"*R: What are your overall thoughts on tutorials for websites?*
P: I think that especially for websites one is unfamiliar with, tutorials are a great tool to become familiar." (Germanic Participant, Tutorial A)

"*R: What are your overall thoughts on tutorials for websites?*
P: I think they're necessary because, yeah, I think it makes it easier for the person to use a website and not waste time." (Latin American Participant, Tutorial A)

The participants from both cultural groups trusted both short (A) and long (B) forms of the tutorial, finding it reliable in its explanation of the website's features and finality to achieve their task. The steps were seen as informative and guiding according to most participants, however, interestingly, a Latin American participant commented Tutorial B, the comprehensive and longer tutorial of ten steps, could have been extended some extra steps.

"*R: Do you think the tutorial was too short or was it enough?*
P: For me it was just enough. could have been longer. I think five to seven steps is usually okay for someone that has experience or something." (Latin American Participant, Tutorial B)

In contract, a Germanic student shared that Tutorial A – the quick and shorter one with only five steps – could be shortened.

"*R: If you had to improve the tutorial's efficient efficiency, what changes would you make?*
P: Maybe like, like you suggested, perhaps shorter." (Germanic Participant, Tutorial A)

Most suggestions to improve the tutorial's overall efficiency – how well and to the point it delivered the necessary information – were either none or to make it shorter. However, the participants that presented other forms of improvements were varied. One Germanic student using the shorter tutorial participant suggested the five steps move on their own with a short timer so the user does not have to repetitively click for the next step. A suggestion made also included making the tutorial optional, with the pop-up not taking up the middle of the screen and darkening the background, rather, be in the corner as a suggestion and not be intrusive.

"*R: What are the overall thoughts on tutorials for websites?*
P: I think most of the time they are not needed but at the same time, like I feel like they have to be there just in case someone is using the website for the first time and needs it but again, I just think that they need to be optional." (Latin American Participant, Tutorial A)

A Germanic and a Latin American participant, both with the longer format tutorial expressed the possibility of the tutorial to have more visual queues. The visual queue suggested by the Germanic participant was of a small window with short clips demonstrating how the blogpost website works, such as where to click, an example of topics to write about and how to publish the blog. A second visual cue suggested was either arrows pointing to the mentioned buttons in the tutorial – such as to create a post, where to add media, and where to publish – or highlight the area around the button to draw the user's attention towards it.

Some participants voiced no requiring the tutorial to navigate the website in order to complete their task. Among Latin American participants, all but one case of the "Usefulness Negative" theme was from the short tutorial, all other mentions were from participants taking the longer format tutorial, citing the simplicity of the user interface (UI) does not require guidance to navigate.

"*R: Were there any unnecessary parts of the tutorial?*
P: For me particularly, I think maybe the tutorial overall was not very nice and necessary. Because I started reading it more out of like, oh, maybe there is nothing complex to it. But as I said before, like, I saw that it was just normal gadgets." (Latin American Participant, Tutorial A)

The opposite is true to Germanic participants as majority of instances where perceived negative view towards the tutorials usefulness in Tutorial A, all citing the website UI is simple enough as to not need the tutorial to perform the task given.

"*R: How would you have done your task without the tutorial? Would it have been the same, slightly longer (to complete), or more difficult?*
P: I think to be honest I would have done the task the exact same with and without a tutorial as the website itself was very user experience friendly and self explanatory." (Germanic Participant, Tutorial A)

Discussion

The aim of the study was to explore to what extent Germanic and Latin American cultures differ in their perceived user experience towards tutorials by utilizing the cultural dimension of Uncertainty Avoidance (UA) from Hofstede's (2011) framework, answering the research question of: *To what extent do Latin American students perceive tutorials differently to Germanic students?* This specific framework is chosen over similar ones such as Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) and Schein (1983) models due to their focus on business and organizational cultures. Additionally, while the GLOBE study is higher in complexity and is still on-going, it is too complex for this kind of study and it also has a higher focus on the business cultural context (Shi & Wang, 2011). These critiques make the Hofstede's the best fit to compare the difference in perception towards tutorials between the two cultures (Lee et al., 2012; Srite, 2006; Shi & Wang, 2011).

The findings suggest that Latin American students have a more favorable view on website tutorials both in general and in the specific situation they were presented with the "MyLore" website, finding it instructional and helpful, while Germanic students had an overall positive view on tutorials, most voice it would be preferable to navigate on their own if given the chance. In this section, the key findings will be further interpreted and linked to

prior literature from the theoretical framework, followed by the practical implications the study offers, then the limitations encountered and suggestions for future research.

Key Findings

As previously mentioned, the participants from both distinct cultural backgrounds had an overall positive perception towards the "MyLore" tutorial and other forms of instructions in other websites in general, with some present deviation. Somewhat contrary to the study by Li (2019), there is some difference between the two cultures from Latin American countries and Germanic countries, although a small one. In Li's (2019) there was no significant difference between the participants in regards to their location and their perception of user manuals. One possible factor is their professions, needing to have prior knowledge to understand the user documentation per the study requirements, as well as the suggested future research improvement to localize the documentation, something suggested more frequently by Germanic participants in making the tutorial more optional rather than intrusive.

The participants with Latin American cultural background – linked to a higher level of collectivism and higher uncertainty avoidance – displayed more favorable perception towards both of the quick and long tutorials, with some suggesting improvements when asked to increase the the amount of steps of the long format tutorial. This comes into an agreement with both Bankole & Bankole (2016) and Lai et al. (2016) findings regarding cultures with higher collectivism. The opposite is said to cultures with higher individualism, which consequently have a lower level of UA and prefer navigating websites and their varied features on their own rather than rely on instructions, recognized by Lee et al. (2008).

However, there were instances where Germanic participants enjoyed the both tutorials, not finding them necessary in the current situation but agreeing that they might be of better use to other users who might struggle with the platforms they access. Some of the Germanic participants noted that the intrusive nature of the tutorial as pop-up taking up the main screen by darkening the background was not to their liking, preferring the tutorial to be optional, some suggesting it be in the corner of the page. De Souza and Bernades (2016) note the importance for platforms to accommodate users' cultural background in order to not lead to user frustration with regards to the cosmetics and features, which connects to the Germanic participants perception of the website (Pereira and Baranauskas, 2015).

Practical Implications

The participants offered varied improvements for both long and short format tutorials. Both participants had similar opinions in making the tutorial optional and not intrusive, others offered making the tutorial more visual and no text with short video demonstrations. Most of the participants that offered improvements desired for a shorter tutorial in both cases, however, a Latin American participant recommended making the long format tutorial even longer, adding five more steps to the current ten step tutorial. Nevertheless, the general consensus was of the tutorials' ability to help the participants navigate and understand the website's features in an efficient manner, most conveying its sufficiency in amount of steps.

The findings confirm what the explored literature emphasizes, which is that users' cultural background do pose an influence to the users perception of website tutorials in their user experience, although not in a significant enough way to necessitate a substantial change to the tutorial's presence, usage, appearance, and information content. Such findings add to the very small pool of research that compared the cultural differences in user perception towards tutorials through Hoftede's framework between Latin American countries and the chosen Germanic countries (Germany and Netherlands). This allows for more research in comparing cultures from the generalized ones of this study to be more one-to-one, for example, comparing the extent of the difference between Dutch users and Argentinian users in regards tutorial perception.

The practical implications that come from the analysis are for websites to adapt how they present their tutorials and their length, changing these characteristics according to location of the servers they platforms are accessed through.

In a Latin American server the tutorial could still be a pop-up, however, it should be moved to the corner of the screen and not darken the background, adding highlights to the mentioned buttons for better visualization. And for when the website is accessed in a Germanic server, the tutorial is a small pop up as an option if the user finds the need for more detailed instructions upon not being able to do it themselves and requiring better clarification of certain features. This as a whole would improve user experience by adapting to their cultural backgrounds, whether it is one that prefers the presence of instructions and one that prefers to navigate and explore the website on their own.

Limitations and Suggestion For Future Research

Although there was a present difference in regards to how participants perceived the website's tutorials based on their cultural background, it was not of great significance to warrant drastic changes to websites' tutorials. This can be attributed to the generalization of

the two cultures, in which a total of thirty three countries are put as one broad Latin American culture and both Germany and Netherlands are made as one Germanic culture. A deeper analysis on cultures from singular cultures could have brought to light more significant differences, or even the contrary. This generalization was made due to the abundance of both German and Dutch students, and the limited number of Latin American students, as only choosing one of the thirty three countries could have lessened the pool of participants drastically.

Another limitation to the research was the number of participants as a larger number of participants could potentially grant more detailed insights. Other forms of data collection could also be explored, as through the interviews conducted, responses from participants were in general too short and not developed enough. Changes for this can come from formulating more open-ended questions, as well as utilizing other forms of data collection, such as focus groups in which participants share the same cultural background for more in-depth responses.

In search of a different study aim, future research can also explore the interesting lack of focus on what the tutorials explain due to the common response of some participants not adding images and claiming they didn't see such an option by utilizing the same study design but adding eye tracking to monitor what users look at more and less frequently. Future research could also benefit in the refinement of the website as the one utilized for this study was a demo version and not accessible by a wider public, restricting how and when participants could take part in the research. By using a more professionally made website that is accessible, the participants' perceptions may change and also help increase the sample size.

Conclusion

This study aimed to gather insight into the extent of the differences between Latin American and Germanic students in the perception of website tutorials due to limited existing research. To make this comparison, the study used one of the six cultural dimensions from Hoftede's framework in comparing cultures as the best fitting for the aim of the research, the dimension being of how much a culture avoids uncertainty in their given situation.

The findings indicate that although both groups present a favorable view towards the tutorials presented – divided into four groups between short and long format tutorials, ranging from five to ten steps respectively – mostly on its efficiency and usefulness, Germanic

participants conveyed the tutorials were not required to accomplish their given task of making a blog post about the university campus, and had a more negative view towards them compared to Latin American participants. The suggestions made by the participants coincide with their cultural backgrounds. Latin American participants expressed the tutorial's usefulness and efficiency in explaining the "MyLore" website in a high frequency for both tutorial formats. The opposite is true, to a lesser extent, with the Germanic participants, as while they also displayed favourable perception towards the tutorials usefulness and efficiency, the preferable scenario would be to not include the tutorial, or at least have it be optional.

The study demonstrates that different cultural backgrounds can affect how a user perceives tutorials in websites even with the same end goal in mind, requiring minor changes to how the instructions are presented and formulated.

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Appendix

[1]

During the preparation of this work, I used OpenAI to help better explain which cultural dimension would fit best with users' perception of tutorials between hierarchy and uncertainty avoidance. After using this tool, I thoroughly reviewed and edited the content as needed, taking full responsibility for the final outcome.

[2]

Table 1

Tutorial A

Tutorial Steps	Description (Text)
Steps 1	Welcome to MyLore. This quick tutorial will help you get started with the basic features.
Step 2	Creating Posts Click on 'New Post' to start writing your content.
Step 3	Rich Text Editor Use the formatting toolbar to style your text with bold, italic, and other options.
Step 4	Adding Images Click the image icon to upload pictures to

	your posts.
Step 5	Publishing When you're done, click 'Publish' to share your post with others. You've completed the Quick Tutorial!

[3]

Table 2

Tutorial B

Tutorial Steps	Description (Text)
Steps 1	Welcome to MyLore This comprehensive tutorial will guide you through all the features of the platform in detail.
Step 2	Navigating the Dashboard The dashboard shows your posts, analytics, and activity. Explore each section to understand what's available.
Step 3	Creating Posts Click on 'New Post' to start writing. You can add text, images, and format your content using the rich text editor.
Step 4	Text Formatting Use the formatting toolbar to make your text bold, italic, or create lists and headings.
Step 5	Adding Media

	Enhance your posts with images by clicking the image button in the editor toolbar.
Step 6	Link Insertion Add links to external websites by selecting text and clicking the link button.
Step 7	Categorizing Content Assign categories to your posts to help others find your content more easily.
Step 8	Draft Saving Your work is automatically saved as a draft. You can come back and continue editing later.
Step 9	Preview Mode Before publishing, you can preview how your post will look to readers.
Step 10	Publishing When you're satisfied with your post, click 'Publish' to make it available to others. You've completed the Comprehensive Tutorial!

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[4]

Table 3

Themes and subthemes

Category	Subcode	Code Label	Description	Examples
Perceived User Experience	Enjoyment	Enjoyment_Positive	Going through the tutorial and website is seen as a pleasant and engaging experience, where the user finds the tutorial interesting and a good use of their time and skills.	Q: Did you enjoy going through the tutorial presented to you? A: I enjoyed it, it was quick and easy
		Enjoyment_Negative	The user did not enjoy the tutorial, or found it boring or unhelpful.	Q: How did the tutorial influence your overall enjoyment of using the website? A: I don't think it influenced it that much
	Usefulness	Usefulness_Postive	The user found the tutorial convenient and practical in explaining the website's elements and as a place to make blog-like posts, fulfilling its directional/educational purpose.	Q: Did you find the tutorial necessary to understand the website's mechanics A: I think it makes it easier and quicker to go through it if you go through it for the first time
		Usefulness_Negative	The tutorial is not considered useful or necessary in completing the task and navigating through the website.	Q: Do you think the tutorial was overall useful for the website? A: Not necessarily. I think I would have figured it out without it as well.

Trust	Trust_Positive	The user has confidence in the tutorial to properly explain the website's functions, elements and mechanisms.	Q: Did the tutorial feel reliable to you? A: Yeah, I did. Like, it looked like most tutorials from websites
	Trust_Negative	The tutorial was not perceived as trustworthy for performing the task and guiding the user through the website and its features	Q: If the tutorial made a mistake, how would that have affected your trust in the website? A: I think I would have been a bit like, okay, this is quite a simple thing. How can you mess this up?
Expectancy	Expectancy_Positive	The tutorial fulfills the user's belief of the website's proposed and promised functionality, where the functions that are shown work as intended	Q: Did the length and detail of the tutorial match what you thought it would be? A: Overall I think it was enough, but it wasn't lengthy. It was more than I would expect for a website like this, but it wasn't dense or lengthy
	Expectancy_Negative	The tutorial did not fulfill the user's expectation of its intended purpose	Q: Was the tutorial up to your expectation of what a tutorial for a blog post website would look like? A: I found it to be inconsistent and very bland, so not really
Efficiency	Efficiency_Positive	The tutorial explains with minimal text in a concise, direct manner the functionalities and purpose of the website.	Q: Do you think the tutorial was too short/long, or just enough? A: I think it was enough for publishing

	Efficiency_Negative	The tutorial is no efficient in delivering the information and in instructing the user through the website and its features	Q: Did you find a tutorial to be efficient in explaining the website’s features? A: No, I found it to be very lacking and short
Tutorial Usage	Tutorial Usage Positive	Understanding, opinion and thoughts regarding tutorials in general, how often they are engaged with and/or sought after	Q: What are your overall thoughts on tutorials for websites? A: I think they're helpful when they're short and concise, when they don't have much text and when the things it's like on the tutorial showing what to do
	Tutorial Usage Negative	The user holds a negative view towards tutorials such as annoyance, redundant, disturbance, waste of time, unnecessary, and such.	Q: What is your opinion towards website tutorials? A: If it's something that is really similar to other apps or other websites that I've used before, I don't need a tutorial
Improvements suggested		Improvements to the tutorial suggested to make it more efficient, explanatory, interesting, eye-catching, and easy to follow.	Q: If you had to improve the tutorial efficiency, what changes would you make? A: Yeah, it could be arrows or yeah, maybe like, some small symbols that show you exactly what it's inside

Following of Steps	How much the user followed the tutorial steps, either all steps, skipped through it, or skipped entirely.	Q: Did you skip it or did you go through it all? A: I kind of read the titles but then I kind of skipped through it.

Note: Questions are included in the examples for additional context.

[5]

Literature search log

Date	Source	Search Terms and Strategies	Hits	Notes
24/03	Science Direct	Cultural dimensions AND technology adoption	360	Limited publish time from 2015 to 2025; more focus on technology adoption/acceptance
24/03	Science Direct	Hofstede AND software usability	2649	Little inclusion of usability
24/03	Science Direct	Cultural differences AND human-computer interaction	460	No inclusion of culture; focus on computer and human interactions
24/05	Science Direct	Hofstede AND human-computer interaction	183	
24/05	Science Direct	Multimedia learning AND cultural background	70	
24/05	Science Direct	Conversational agents AND user trust	192	
24/05	Science Direct	Conversational agents AND Hofstede	22	
24/05	Science Direct	Instructional format AND user experience	33	
24/03	Web of Science	User instructions AND software learning	523	
25/03	Web of Science	Software learning AND Hofstede	19	Majority about academic learning
25/03	Web of Science	User experience AND culture	5835	
25/04	Web of Science	user instruction AND culture	308	

25/04	Google Scholar	hofstede cultural dimensions in latin america	49900	
25/04	Google Scholar	hofstede cultural dimensions in germany	83500	